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MF

Incorporating Metal Forces

NEW - ESSENTIAL ROCK FOR THE '90s

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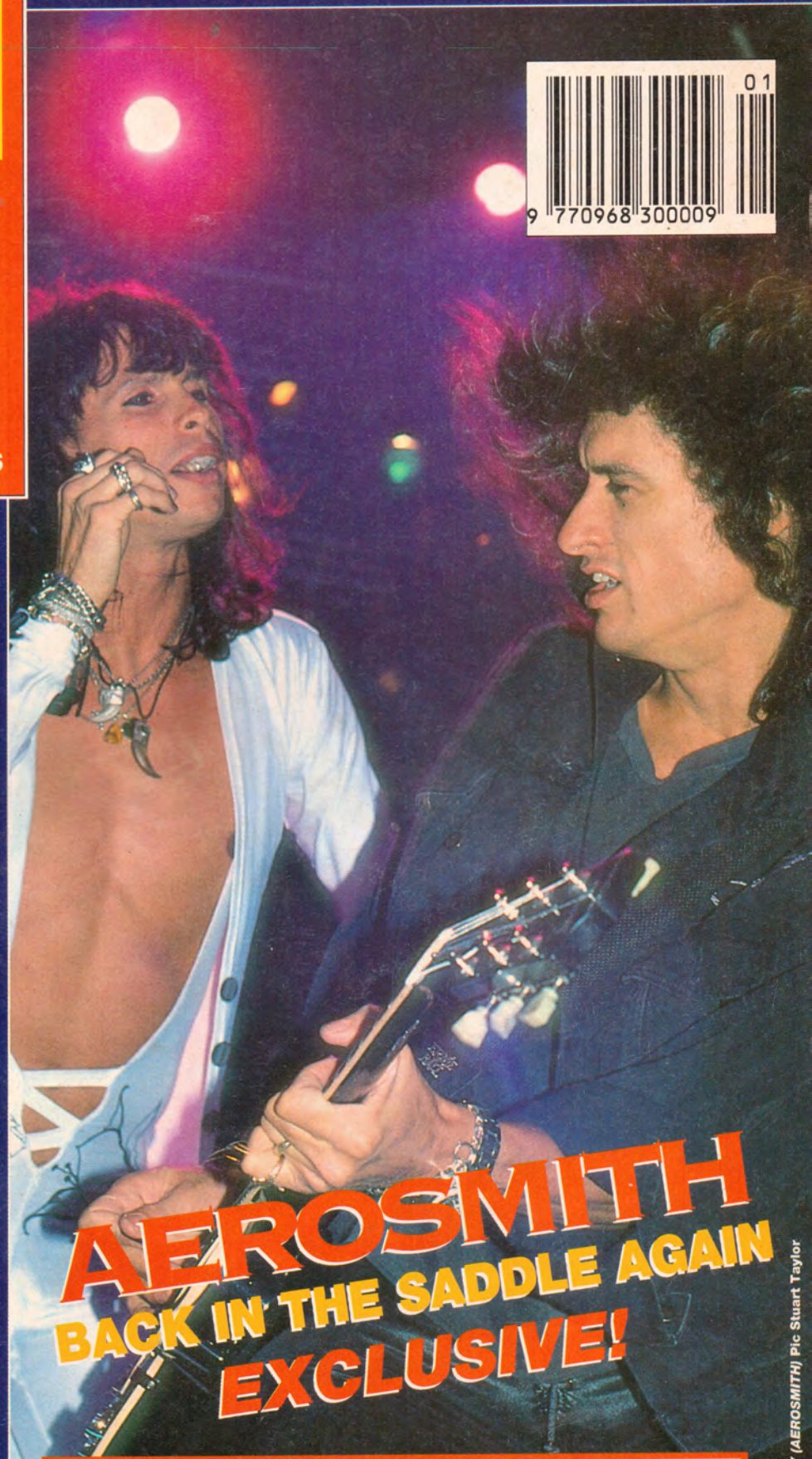

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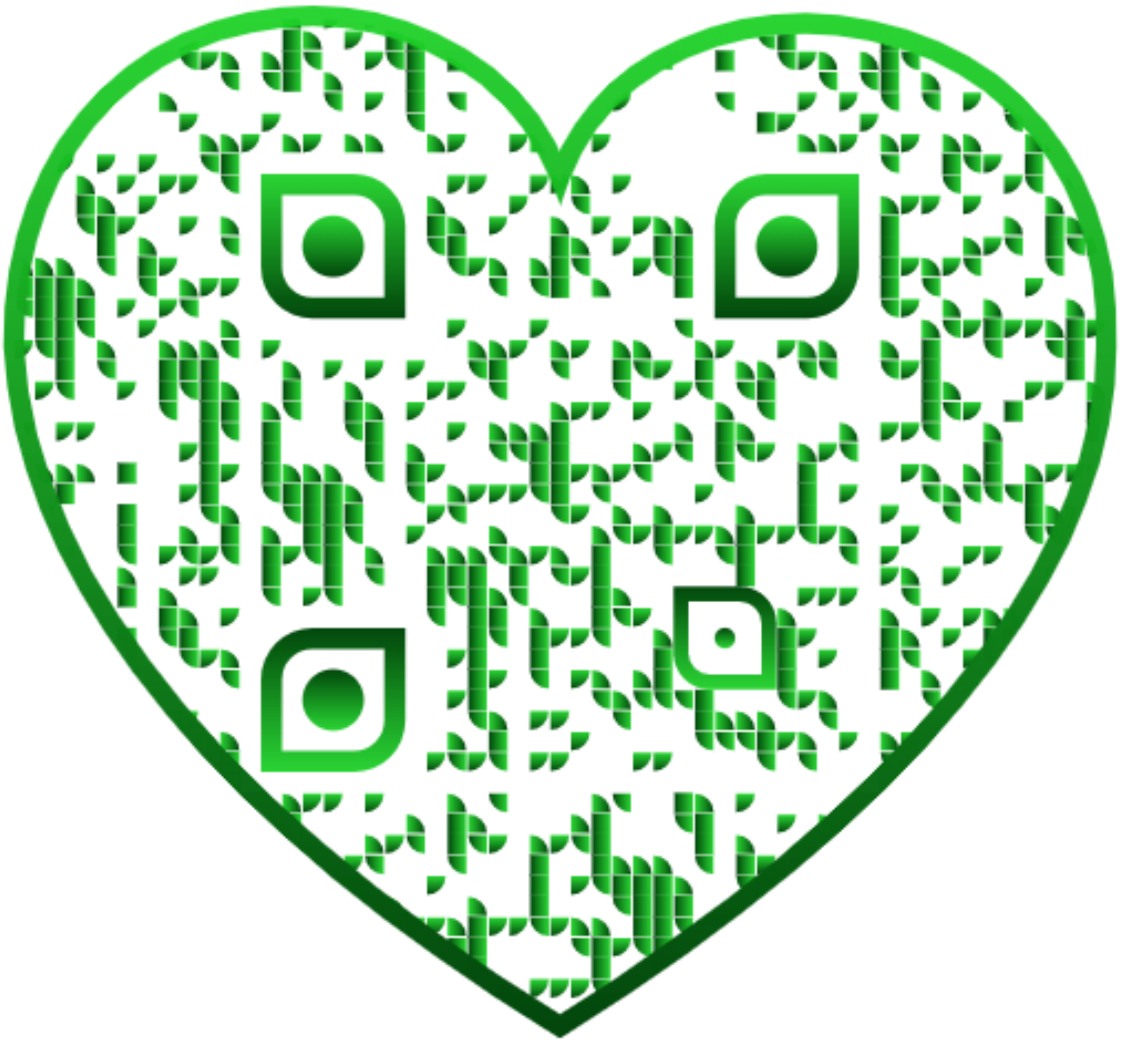
STEVEN TYLER and JOE PERRY (AEROSMITH) Pic Stuart Taylor



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• Foreclosure of A Dream •
• Skin O' My Teeth •
• High Speed Dirt •
• Go To Hell •

and the Symphony of Destruction Gristle Mix
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DEVELOPS INTO A REALITY 23RD NOVEMBER

No. One JANUARY 1993

MF

Incorporating Metal Forces

OK, this is it, folks. The beginning. A new dawn. A new era. Welcome to *MF*, a magazine all of us on the staff believe will appeal to the *modern* rock fan.

Now, some of you (perhaps the majority) will probably recall the name *Metal Forces*. Well, this will be the last time you'll find it mentioned in these pages. Suffice it to say that *MF* is the natural successor to that august journal. Over a period of nearly a decade, *Metal Forces* established itself as a knowledgeable, informed and enthusiastic monthly publication, dedicated to all things metal. But times change, as does the music scene. So, welcome to *MF*.

What we have done is simple. We have taken all those values that made *Metal Forces* such a respected magazine worldwide and applied them to a slightly wider and more diverse musical outlook. We are a *rock* magazine, OK? Let's get that straight right from the start. Thus, you'll find EMF nestling alongside Deicide. Bon Jovi exchanging pleasantries with Nirvana. We don't believe in segregation and ghettos. All of us on this magazine have open minds when it comes to music. All of us are convinced that we are living through enlightened musical times. And if it's rock, then we are very keen to cover it.

MF makes no bold claims. We aren't out to break the mould of rock music coverage, because none of us believe that is what is required. It just needs to be more flexible. The magazine reflects the wide and diverse tastes of those who work on its production, because at heart we are like you - *fans!* More time is spent arguing on what will be played on the office turntable than anything else - because we actually *care passionately* about music.

So, no claims as to what we are gonna achieve in the coming weeks, months, years. No outrageous hype or gimmicks. The reason is simple. What we are trying to give you is a magazine we'd all buy. And that means an informed and informative monthly publication that is well researched, well written, intelligently designed. We want you to look forward eagerly to your monthly fix of *MF*. We want to provide value for money in times when economic restrictions affect everyone. We will never be afraid to criticise, but will always avoid slagging off something or someone. We will always aim to be constructive.

But, that isn't to say that *MF* will be dour, dowdy and tiresomely serious. We *do* have a sense of humour. It is *only* rock'n'roll, after all, and you will certainly find more than a smirk or two in our coverage.

In short, I believe that we have (to use football parlance) built a squad of writers and photographers capable of Premier League stature - and more. Some of the names you will recognise from past deeds (and misdemeanours). Others might well be new to you. But they all have the hallmark of quality and come with a guarantee that they are among the best in their field. And we are not sitting back on our laurels. Oh no. We are constantly seeking fresh writing and photographic talents. To that end, if you feel that your abilities are absolutely crucial, then write to me at the following address: **MF, 40 Langham Street, London WIN 5RG, England**. The same also goes for any criticisms or suggestions you have for the magazine (not too rude or biologically impossible, *please!*) We do aim to start up a letters page, so get those pens cracking.

Well, here endeth the sermon. The proof of what *MF* is about lies in these pages. I hope you will be impressed. I trust we will have your company regularly from now on. I feel *MF* is an exciting and necessary addition to the shelves of the nation's newsagents. I hope you agree. Oh, and Issue Two is out on January 21.

MALCOLM DOME

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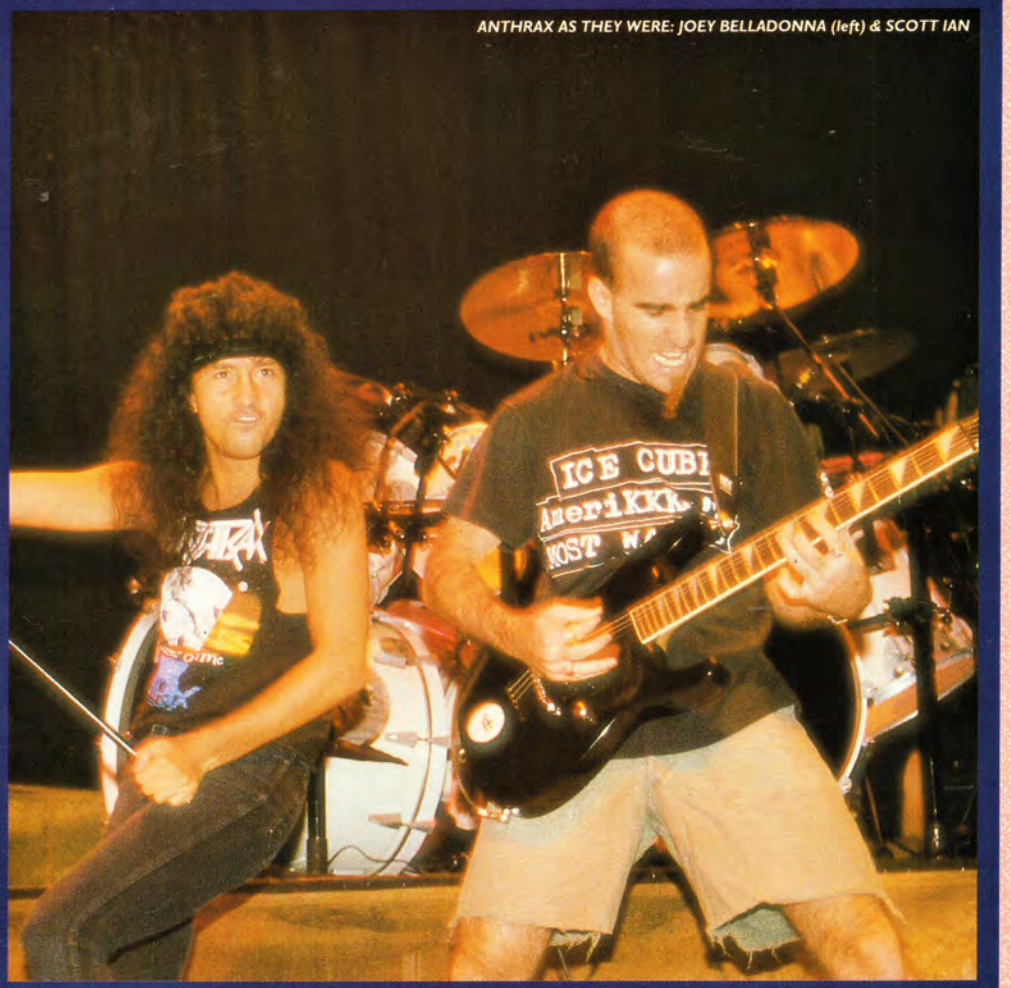

ANTHRAX AS THEY WERE: JOEY BELLADONNA (left) & SCOTT IAN

A NEW ERA DAWNS!

■ **ANTHRAX** have just begun work on their latest studio album, the first with new vocalist John Bush and for new label Elektra. The album is being produced by Dave Jerden, who has just finished working with **Sacred Reich** on their new record, "Independent" (due out soon on Hollywood).

Basic recording is taking place in Los Angeles, with Charlie Benante's drum tracks being laid down at A&M and the rest of the work taking place at El Dorado. The band will then head to New York to mix down the album at either Electric Lady or Right Track. Expect a release in April.

As yet, no title has been confirmed for the LP - "We have a very tentative one," revealed guitarist Scott Ian, "but I don't wanna say anything until it is confirmed." - but the band of Bush, Ian, Benante, guitarist Dan Spitz and bassist Frank Bello had around 15 songs ready before they enter the studio, from which the final selection of 12 songs will be made. Among those numbers already to roll are: *"Room For One More"*, *"Only"*, *"Invisible"*, *"This Is Not An Exit"*, *"Poison My Eyes"*, *"Noisegate"*, *"The Black Lodge"* and *"Burst"*.

Speaking about working with Bush (who has co-written most of the lyrics with him), Ian stated: "The more we work together, the easier it gets. No disrespect to Joey (Belladonna), but when I wrote lyrics for him, I visualized the way they should sound in my head, but they never came out that way on record. With John that problem doesn't exist. He has a real bluesy voice and the only way I can describe the style of the new album is that people felt our last one, "Persistence Of Time", was heavier than the one before ("State Of Euphoria"). This album will be heavier still, and has the benefit of aggressive vocals!

"You don't get to start over again very often. But that's what we are doing now. And things couldn't be more optimistic for us. Sure, to the outside world we have gotten more and more successful with every release. But had we not made the change in vocalist, then I think we'd have broken up. Honestly, that's the way that feel things were going. I haven't spoken to Joey since he left the band, however I do hope that he has success in whatever he wants to do. At the moment he's got his own band (**Belladonna** - see interview this issue)."

One final word on the Anthrax front. The release of "Noize Live - The End Of An Error" through Island (their final contractual obligation to their erstwhile label and, presumably, their final release with Belladonna) won't now take place until the Spring of '94. It will also now appear under the title of "Noize Live - The End Of An *Era*", Island having objected to the negative implications of the original suggestion.

"We tried telling them that the *error* in question didn't really refer to them. It could just as easily be about us. But they still objected to it, so in order to save a fuss, we agreed to change it. I must, in conclusion, that we will miss Island Records hugely in the UK. They were always really great to us. If only the American companyhad been as good..."

In the meantime, it has now been confirmed that Bush's previous band, **Armored Saint**, have now split up, a sad end for a band who were never given the proper record label and managerial support they so richly deserved. Drummer Gonzo and guitarist Phil Sandoval have put together a new outfit called **Life After Death**, whilst guitarist Jeff Duncan is also working on his own project. Bassist Joey Vera, meantime, is seeking employment.

MALCOLM DOME

■ **ARCADE** - featuring ex-**Ratt** vocalist Stephen Pearcy, former **Cinderella** drummer Fred Coury, bassist Michael Andrews and guitarists Frankie Wilsex (previously with **The Seahags**, when he was known as Frankie Wilsey) and Donny Syracuse - will release their self-titled, debut album through Epic Records in the US during March. It was produced by David Prater. Among those songs set for inclusion are: *"Dancin' With Angels"*, *"Livin' Dangerously"*, *"Messed Up World"*, *"Cry No More"*, *"Nothin' To Lose"*, *"Never Goin' Home"*, *"All Shook Up"*, *"Psychotic Reaction"*, *"Screamin' S.O.S."* and *"Mother Blues"*.

■ **CINDERELLA** have just started recording work on their fourth studio album with producer Andy Johns. The band now features Tom Keifer (lead vocals/guitar), Jeff LaBar (lead guitar - contrary to rumour still with the band), Eric Brittingham (bass) and new drummer Kevin Valentine.

■ Classic German band **ACCEPT** will release their reunion album, "Objection Overruled", through BMG/RCA in February. The band features vocalist Udo Dirkschneider, guitarist Wolf Hoffmann, bassist Peter Baltes and drummer Stefan Kaufmann.

The album itself was self-produced at Dierks Studios in Pulheim, Germany.

■ Chicago band **MINDBOMB** have signed to Mercury Records. Expect their first product early next year.

■ **DARKTHRONE** are currently working on their third album for the Peaceville label. Titled "Under A Funeral Moon", it will be released in January.

■ **STAN BUSH** is currently looking for a deal, having completed work on a new album, his first since his mid'80s "Stan Bush And Barrage" album on Epic Records. He also has a track included on a forthcoming German compilation album and is currently working with producer Georgio Morodor.

■ **ANNIHILATOR** are currently finishing off their third album at Fiasco Bros Recording Studios in Vancouver. As yet untitled, it is being produced by guitarist Jeff Waters/engineered by Paul Blake, together with Max Norman, who is working on some of the drum tracks. The full track listing is: *"Knight Jumps Queen"*, *"Brain Dance"*, *"Set The World On Fire"*, *"Nozone"*, *"Snake In The Grass"*, *"Sounds Good To Me"*, *"Bats In The Belfry"*, *"The Edge"*, *"Phoenix Rising"*, *"Fantastic Things"*, plus one as yet unnamed cut. The band's line-up is now Waters, Neil Goldberg (guitar), Wayne Darley (drums), Ray Hartmann (drums) and new boy Aaron Nora (vocals).

■ **HEART** are currently working on their latest album with co-producers John Purdell and Duane Baron at Bad Animals Seattle, the new studio co-owned by the Wilson sisters Ann (vocals) and Nancy (guitar).

■ **THE ALMIGHTY** are currently working on a new album, "Powertripp-in", with producer Mark Dodson. It is expected to be released by Polydor next April.

■ **CANCER** have just begun work on their third album for the Vinyl Solution label with producer Simon Efemy (**The Wonderstuff**, **The One Thing**, **Paradise Lost**, **Diamond Head**). Recording is taking place at The Windings Studio in Wrexham.

■ **NEEDLE PARK** is the name of the new band formed by ex-**Poison** guitarist CC DeVille. Also featuring former **Warlock**/**War & Peace** bassist Tommy Hendrickson, ex-**Hurricane** vocalist Kelly Hansen and former **Kingdom Come**/**Wild Horses** drummer James Kottack, the band are signed to the Hollywood label.

They are expected to begin work shortly on an album.

■ **DEATH** will begin work on a new album at Morrisound Studios in Florida during February, once again working with producer Scott Burns. Joining mainman Chuck Schuldiner (guitar/vocals) on the project are bassist Skott Carino and former **Dark Angel** drummer Gene Hoglan.

■ **CROWBAR** have parted company with guitarist Kevin Noonan. The New Orleans band will shortly be undertaking a German tour in the company of **Trouble**, **The Obsessed** and **Cathedral**. For the moent, they will remain a three-piece.

■ **CYNIC** have replaced bassist Tony Choy with ex-**Atheist** man Darren McFarland.

■ **CATHEDRAL** will begin work on their second album on January 18 at The Manor Studios in Oxfordshire. It will be produced by Dave Bianco, who worked with **Trouble** on their self-titled 1990 album. Expect a release through Earache (UK)/Columbia (US) during May.

The album is to be titled "Ride Through The Decay" and will feature such tracks as: *"Ride Through The Decay"*, *"Violet Breath"*, *"Funer Lover"* and *"Fountain Of Innocence"*. According to vocalist Lee Dorrian, "this album is a lot more sophisticated, but totally heavy. If you can imagine a cross between **Mountain**, **Deep Purple**, early **Black Sabbath** and our first album, "Forest Of Equilibrium", then you'll get the idea!"

Dorrian has been busily re-writing the lyrics for the album, feeling that his original set were far too happy for the band!

Prior to recording, the band will be undertaking tours of Israel and Germany, the latter with Trouble, **The Obsessed** and **Crowbar**. In the meantime, Dorrian, drummer Mark Wharton and guitarists Gary Jennings/Adam Lehan are looking for a permanent bassist to replace Mark Griffiths, who has left the band as he no longer wishes to tour. Interested parties should send a tape/biography/photo to: **Paul Loasby, 115 Haslo Garage, 115 Humber Road, London SE3 7LW, England**. Be warned, you must be into early Sabbath.

Finally on the Cathedral front, watch out for a very limited seven inch single being pressed up by US fanzine *Ultimatum*. It will feature a version of Black Sabbath's "Solitude" (different to that found on the "Masters Of Misery - Black Sabbath: An Earache Tribute". "This version is sick and bizarre," laughs Dorrian) plus an acoustic version of "Reaching Happiness, Touching Pain" from the "Forest..." album.

■ **BILLY IDOL** is working with producer Robin Hancock on a new studio album in Los Angeles.

■ **KISS** are all set to issue their third live album, "Alive III", through Vertigo next June/July. It was recorded at Indianapolis, Cleveland and Detroit.

ATOM SEED (L-R): PAUL CUNNINGHAM, JERRY HAWKINS, CHRIS 'CLEVER BOY' DALE and SIMON JAMES

Seed's hard sell

■ In another sad example of a British record company not giving full support to worthy British rock bands, **ATOM SEED** look likely to part company with London Records before the release of what would have been the follow-up to "Get In Line", their debut album originally released on FM-Revolver Records, prior to their major label deal.

Following the recording of the album, which goes by the working title of "Hard Sell Paranoia", in Wales with producer Simon Efemey (**Wonder Stuff**, **Diamond Head**) it would appear that things came to a head between band (vocalist Paul Cunningham, bassist Chris Dale, drummer Jerry Hawkins and guitarist Simon James), management and London Records, the laast-named not wanting to give the band the push it was felt was needed.

It is believed that an agreement has now been reached between all parties, and the partnership with London will end imminently, leaving Atom Seed and their management company free to sort out another deal for the band.

Atom Seed will be playing some club dates before Christmas, including London's Camden Underworld on December 18. "Hard Sell Paranoia", which was to be released in the New Year, will most likely surface slightly later than anticipated on a new label.

The full track listing is: *"Changing Years"*, *"Best Of Life"*, *"Tastes Like Money"*, *"Idiots"*, *"Mother Junk"*, *"Enemy Song"*, *"FFIW"*, *"Hard Sell Paranoia"*, *"Love Money Hate"*,*"Shadows"* and *"Happy"*.

The band will be touring in the New Year. More news as we get it.

JERRY EWING

■ Former **RATT** guitarist Warren De Martini is presently working hard putting together his own project. As yet, the details are unconfirmed, however he is currently writing and rehearsing with a young singer from Texas.

■ **FASTER PUSSYCAT**, **THE LYNCH MOB** and **LITTLE CAESAR** have all been dropped by their respective labels, Elektra in the case of the first pair and Geffen for Little Caesar.

The Pussycat, presently on tour in the US supporting **Kiss**, are confident of having a new deal wrapped up very soon, with several major labels already competing for their signature. However, Little Caesar have now split up, and the future for The Lynch Mob must be in doubt as well, with guitarist George Lynch preparing to record a solo album.

■ **JUDAS PRIEST** will be issuing a compilation album through Columbia early in the new year. It is expected to be a double album.

In the meantime, the future of the band itself seems shrouded in con-fusion. As vocalist Rob Halford has intimated that he has quit the band in order to ensure a future for his offshoot project, **Fight** (also featuring Priest drummer Scott Travis), the remaining theee members of the band (guitarists KK Downing/Glenn Tipton and bassist Ian Hill) have issued the following statement:

We were informed of Rob Halford leaving the band by fax and to date have had no satisfactory explanation for his actions, nor any direct contact with him. We are not party to any dispute he may have with Sony Music and are not familiar with the details or claims of either side.

Whether the projected compilation will be the swansong for this legendary band remains to be seen. However, given Halford's determination to ensure that Fight (also featuring guitarists Russ Parrish/Brian Tilse and bassist Jay Jay) get a good recording deal - something he has claimed isn't possible with Columbia - and his preparedness if necessary to quit Priest in order to achieve his aim, one must wonder whether bridges have been burnt between the singer and his long-time colleagues.

■ **WINGER** are currently working on their third album, for release through East West/Atlantic in February. Titled "Blind, Revolution, Mad", it is being produced by Mike Shipley and will include the following tracks: *"Blind, Revolution, Mad"*, *"In For The Kill"*, *"Spell I'm Under"* and *"Junkyard Dog"*.

The band are recording as a three-piece, following the departure of guitarist/keyboardsman Paul Taylor.

■ **DEEP PURPLE** have parted company with singer Joe Lynn Turner, thereby confirming a situation that has been rumoured for some while. The singer recorded one album with the band, "Slaves & Masters" (1990), however his attempts to take the remainder of the band (guitarist Ritchie Blackmore, bassist Roger Glover, drummer Ian Paice and keyboardsman Jon Lord) in a more contemporary direction eventually led to an irreversible split, and thence to the band's eventual decision to fire the American vocalist

In place of Turner, the band have rehired Ian Gillan, the idea being for them to celebrate next year's 25th anniversary of their formation with an album and tour featuring its most acclaimed line-up - affectionately known as Deep Purple Mk II.

The band seem unlikely to continue working with producer Thom Paununzio, who had been working with them at Bearsville Studios in Upstate New York. Moreover, Turner will almost certainly take back his songs. Among those titles Deep Purple had been working on in the studio were: *"Shreds"*, *"One Step Closer"*, *"Hot Like A Hurricane"*, *"Stroke Of Midnight"*, *"Lost"* and *"When Love Takes A Life It's Forever"*. Much of this material was co-written by Turner with guitarist Jim Peterik of **Survivor** fame. And expect some of this work to appear in a different guise on future solo projects from Turner, or else on the projected come-back record from Survivor.

Turner's next project will be a blues-style album for the Blues Bureaux International label, set up by Shrapnel Records supremo Mike Varney. This may feature guest appearances from legendary bluesman Buddy Guy and veteran rocker Gregg Allman. Turner will then probably guest on a couple of tracks for the next **Robin Trower** record. And there are also offers from guitar wizards **Steve Vai** and **Yngwie Malmsteen** to consider.

However, Turner is more likely to sign a production deal with top producer Keith Olsen's new company Kore. This would allow him to work on a solo album, an idea he has cherished for a long while.

"I've got so much material at my disposal," laughs Turner. And this catalogue will be considerably swelled by plans to co-write with **Widowmaker** guitarist Al Pitrelli and former **Saraya** six-stringer Tony Bruno, who is currently touring with **Joan Jett**."

Finally, there is a possibility that Turner will join an all-star band being put together for a tour of Japan at the end of the year; if this goes well, then expect a visit to the UK and Europe early in 1993. As yet unnamed, this sextet would feature the singer alongside guitarists John Norum and Andy Timmons (the latter from **Danger Danger**), bassist Jeff Pilson (ex-**Dokken**), keyboardsman Gary Corbett (**Kiss**/**Cinderella** collaborator) and drummer Bobby Blotzer (**Ratt**).

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TERRORVISION (L-R): LEIGH MARKLEW, TONY WRIGHT, SHUTTY and MARK YATES

TERRORVISION SNEAK OUT DEBUT!

■ Yorkshire-based rockers **TERRORVISION** (bassist Leigh Marklew, drummer Shutty, guitarist Tony Wright and vocalist Mark Yates) have taken the previosuly unheard step of releasing their forthcoming debut album, "Formaldehyde" (due out on EMI in February), on Total Vegas Recordings (with distribution through APT) to coincide with their current support slot with **The Ramones**.

"We've had the album recorded since August, and we've been planning a couple of single releases. Then The Ramones tour came along and we realised we didn't have anything to release at the same time," explains Marklew. "It was a late decision to get it out to coincide with the tour.

"Rather than try and get the big wheels of EMI working on it, we decided it would be best to put something together ourselves in order to get it out in time. The proper release will be in February, but this was just something to get in the shops for The Ramones tour."

The full track listing of "Formaldehyde" is: *"Problem Solved"*, *"Ships That Sink"*, *"American TV"*, *"New Policy One"*, *"Jason"*, *"Killing Time"*, *"Urban Space Crime"*, *"Hole For A Soul"*, *"Don't Shoot My Dog"*, *"Desolation Town"*, *"My House"* and *"Human Being"*.

The album is being released on both CD and green vinyl and will also feature two extra tracks not to be made available on the forthcoming EMI release, namely *"Pain Reliever"* and *"Tea Dance"*.

According to Marklew there has been little resistance from EMI.

"We've been signed to them for about a year now, and obviously you come up against some scheduling things that you maybe don't agree with, but actual problems with EMI have been minimal if any. They've been really supportive of anything that we've wanted to do, but we needed to take this independent route to get this thing out in time.

"Sometimes we think it's hard working with them, but then you look around at what other bands have to face up to and you don't usually get this freedom, so they've been really good in that respect."

Terrorvision will be releasing an EP through EMI in January. This will feature *"Problem Solved"* from "Formaldehyde", backed with recent recordings *"Corpse Fly"*, a cover of **Motörhead**'s *"We Are The Road Crew"* (a long time live favourite from the band's set) and *"Sailing Home"* (according to Marklew, this is "A sea shanty we recorded during the album sessions").

Terrorvision will headline Bradford Queens Hall Cellar Bar on December 22.

JERRY EWING

■ **MY BLOODY VALENTINE** have signed to Island Records.

■ **TESTAMENT** have replaced departed guitarist Alex Skolnick and drummer Louie Clemente with former **Forbidden** pair Glen Alvarez and Paul Bostaph, respectively.

■ **MÖTLEY CRÜE** are currently, working with producer Bob Rock on a new album at Little Mountain Studios in Vancouver. Set to be titled "Til Death Do Us Part", it's the first to feature vocalist John Corabi, previously with **The Scream**.

In the meantime, former Mötley vocalist Vince Neil is working with bassist Phil Soussan (ex-**Ozzy Osbourne**/**Billy Idol**/**Beggars & Thieves**), guitarists Robbie Crane/Steve Stevens (**Billy Idol**) and drummer Vikki Foxx (formerly with **Enuff Z'Nuff**) in a band called **VNB**. Signed to Warner Bros, the album should be issued on February 10, the first anniversary of Neil's sacking from the Crüe.

■ **POISON** will issue their new studio album, "Native Tongue", through Capitol on February 8. Produced by Richie Zito, it is the first release to feature new guitarist Richie Kotzen. The full track listing is: *"Native Tongue"*, *"The Scream"*, *"Stand"* (set to be the first single), *"Stay Alive"*, *"Until You Suffer Some (Fire And Ice)"*, *"Body Talk"*, *"Bring It Home"*, *"7 Days Over You"*, *"Richie's Acoustic Thang"*, *"Ain't That The Truth"*, *"Theatre Of The Soul"*, *"Strike Up The Band"*, *"Ride Child Ride"*, *"Blind Faith"* and *"Bastard Son Of A Thousand Blues"*.

■ **BLACKFOOT** will shortly begin work on a new studio album in Florida. It is to be co-produced by Al Nalli and mainman Ricky Medlocke. Joining vocalist/guitarist Medlocke on this project are guitarist Mark Warple (ex-**Warpdrive**), drummer Benny Rappa (previously with **White Face**) and bassist Kim Stunson (from Texas).

The album (as yet untitled) should be released by Music For Nations in the spring and will include the following songs: *"Sittin' On Top Of The World"* (a **Howlin' Wolf** number), *"After The Rain"*, *"When Angels Cry"*, *"It's All Over Now"* and *"Tonight"* (an acoustic ballad).

■ **SAVATAGE** will release their new album, tentatively titled "Edge Of Thorns", through East West/Atlantic in February. It was once again produced by Paul O'Neill (primarily at Morrisound Studios in Florida) and will include the following tracks: *"All That I Bleed"*, *"Edge Of Thorns"*, *"Follow Me"*, *"Damien"*, *"Lights Out"*, *"Conversation Piece"* and *"Scraggy's Tomb"*.

This will be the band's first release with new vocalist Zack Stevens, a 24-year-old from Boston, previously with **Wicked Witch**. He replaced Jon Oliva a few months ago. However, the previous singer has had a strong hand in writing the material (as well as playing keyboards on the album) and will continue to work with Savatage in the studio. In addition, he also has his own band called **Doctor Butcher**, also featuring former Savatage guitarist Chris Caffrey, ex-**King Diamond** bassist Hal Patino and former **Dirty Looks** drummer Gene Barnett.

■ "Masters Of Misery - Black Sabbath Earache Tribute" is the title of a new compilation album released in Japan only on December 25. It features ten bands on the Earache label performing Sabbath covers. The full track listing is: *"Shock Wave"* - **Cathedral**, *"Snowblind"* - **Sleep**, *"Zero The Hero"* - **Godflesh**, *"Hole In The Sky"* - **Confessor**, *"Changes"* - **Fudge Tunnel**, *"Who Are You"* - **OLD**, *"Lord Of This World"* - **Brutal Truth**, *"N.I.B."* - **Pitch Shifter**, *"The Wizard"* - **Scorn**, *"Sweet Leaf"* - **Cadaver** and *"Solitude"* - Cathedral.

This album will be available by mail order at a price of £14 (UK)/£15 (rest of the world) from: **Earache Merchandise, PO Box 144, Nottingham NG3 4GE, England**. Make all cheques payable to *Earache Merchandise*.

■ **IRON MAIDEN** will issue two live albums shortly through EMI. The first, "A Real Live One", comes out in March and will largely feature material written since the release of "Live After Death" album in 1986. The second one, "A Real Dead One", will be issued in April. This one boasts older songs.

The band will be undertaking a UK tour next May, the dates for which are: **Sheffield Arena May 16, London Wembley Arena 17, Manchester G-Mex 19, Birmingham NEC 20, Glasgow SE&CC 21, Dublin Point 23, Belfast King's Hall 24**. All tickets are priced at £14.50.

A live longform video, shot at Castle Donington in the summer of '92, will be released during late '93.

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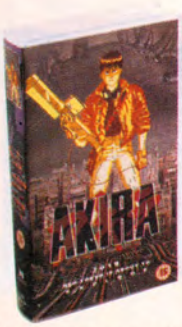

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GRIPPIN

AEROSMITH are just completing work on a new album, "Get A Grip". Bassist Tom Hamilton talks exclusively to MALCOLM DOME about the current state of affairs in the camp

We live in ever shifting times, where the life cycle of any band seems to be shorter than that of a mayfly. Survival is measured in months rather than years, as record companies attempt to fight the cancerous debilitation of the recession through immediate gratification. Thus, any band who can prosper and continue, it would seem, to grow after 21 years 'on the game' is remarkable indeed. But then Aerosmith are not 'any band'. Because, if it is true that the Rolling Stones mapped out the blueprint for longevity without losing touch with contemporary teen ideals and nature, then Aerosmith (vocalist Steven Tyler, guitarists Joe Perry/Brad Whitford, bassist Tom Hamilton and drummer Joey Kramer) have become the embodiment of that spiritual blueprint.

Revered and respected by all who aspire to sprinkle their musical output with the very essence of swagger and class, whilst retaining a real feel for the dirty yet erotic sexual grind, these Bostonian bacchanalians are unique. Guns n' Roses may have briefly flaunted. Mötley Crüe may have flattered. Ratt might have flickered. But Aerosmith - the very word is *adjectival* of a genre.

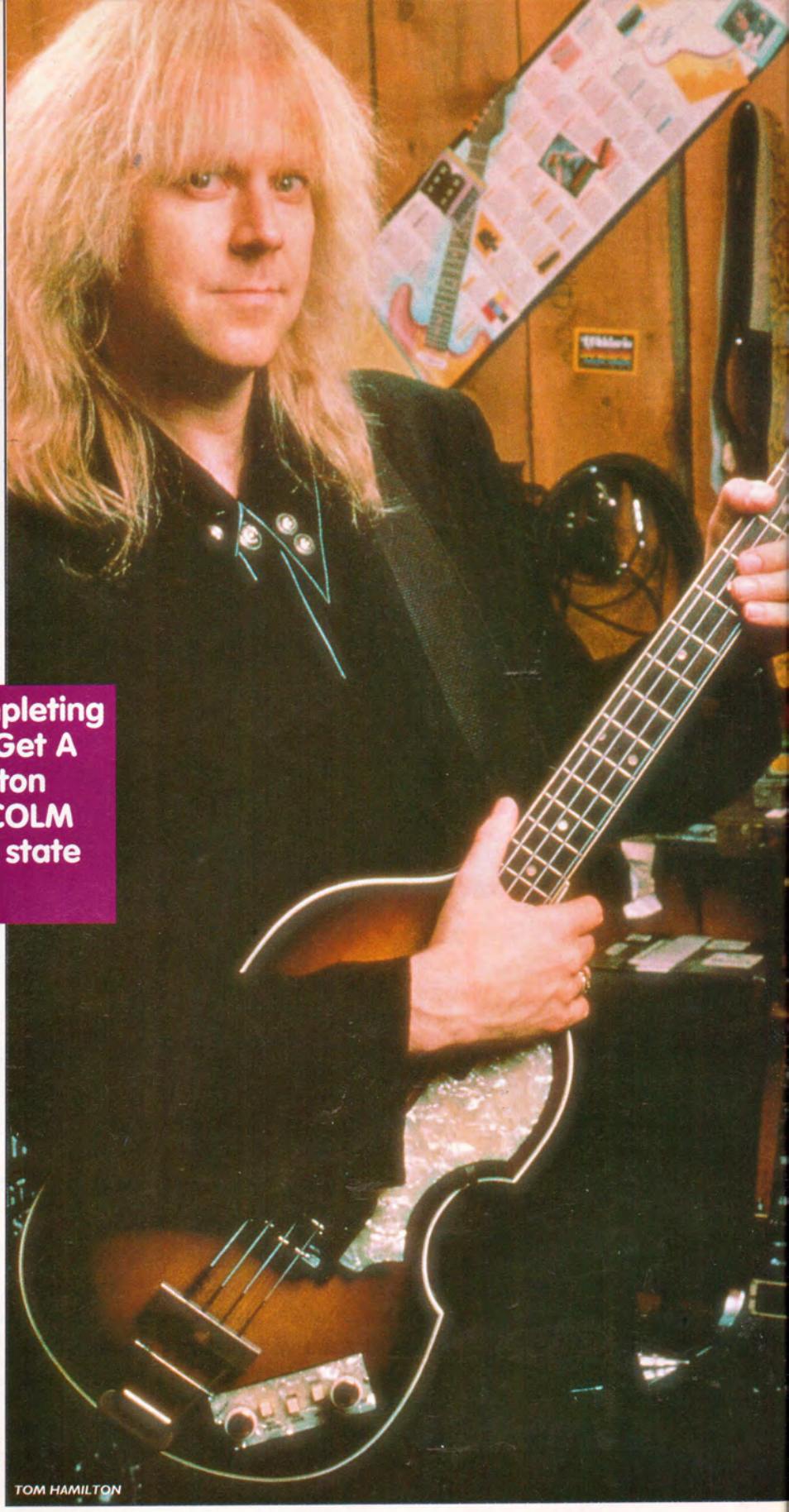
And, incredibly, the band are better and bigger than ever. Inventive, creative, committed and still excited and exciting. Whilst many who began their careers at the same time as the 'Smiths have either given up completely or toned down their act, this lot just *add* to their canon. If any proof was needed, check out their last studio album, 1989's "Pump". Not only one of the biggest sellers in the band's lifespan, but also one of their finest.

Now, they are busily working on a new record, again with producer Bruce Fairbairn. It is tentatively scheduled for release on March 16 under the title of "Get A Grip". But, as Hamilton recently pointed out, it hasn't been an easy ride for Aerosmith in the studio this time around.

"We started out recording at A&M Studios in Los Angeles and cut 14 songs there. But we all felt that we could do better. And we are lucky in that we have reached that stage in our career when we can take the extra time we need to get something right. So, we recently went back into the studio - this time Little Mountain Studios in Vancouver - to do another six-to-eight songs. And we just kept on going until we now have a killer follow-up to the "Pump" album!"

The move into L.A. was certainly a departure for the Aerosmith/Fairbairn partnership, a liaison that began in 1987 with the "Permanent Vacation" record (the band's second for Geffen Records, following on from the "Done With Mirros" outing two years previously, produced by Ted Templeman) and continued on through "Pump". Both were recorded exclusively at Little Mountain, which has become Fairbairn's professional home. And, Aerosmith's decision to change environments almost cost them the services of this top producer.

"We needed to go somewhere else away from



TOM HAMILTON

Vancouver this time. We all felt in the band that we needed a change of pace and scene. For a short period of time, it did look as if we might also have to change producers in order to get away from that city. We had a chilly meeting with Bruce about the situation, after which there did seem to be the possibility that we wouldn't be working with him. He was far from happy with what we proposed, and we weren't very impressed with his attitude. But we all went away, calmed down and eventually agreed to work together in L.A.

"For a while it was fun for us to pretend to be residents in Los Angeles, but the purpose behind the change of city and studio didn't actually work out, so we went back to Vancouver for the second part of the recording process."

Extensive rumours have suggested that the Geffen hierarchy (including A&R guru John David Kalodner, the man who signed Aerosmith to the label in the mid-'80s and has been closely associated with them ever since) were none too impressed with what came out of the L.A. recording sessions, demanding that the band go back into the studio and re-think the project. Inevitably, Hamilton refuses to confirm such stories. However, he is more than willing to admit that having the chance to re-assess the record has helped Aerosmith's creative instincts enormously.

AEROSMITH (L-R): BRAD WHITFORD, TOM HAMILTON, JOEY KRAMER, STEVEN TYLER and JOE PERRY

"For us, this second stage of recording represents a new cycle in the album process. We have been improving on some of what we've already done, because we knew that it could be done. And it is good to be in a situation of listening back to the tapes and deciding where improvements can be made without the pressures of time and budget restrictions, although you can take that too far and end up never being satisfied, never finishing off recording. But in the past we've listened back to albums after they were finished and known there were certain things which could be improved. I'm sure every band does that. Now we are in a position to do just that *before* release.

"In addition, though, we are doing some new stuff. And by the time we are finished, there will be sufficient great songs not only for the album but also for the B sides of singles and other projects if they arise."

As yet, no-one in the Aerosmith camp is prepared to give out much information on song titles, although the following are confirmed: "Livin' On The Edge", "Cryin'", "Amazing", "Crazy" and "Walk On Down" (which features Joe Perry on lead vocals).

"I really can't confirm any more song titles as yet, apart from one called "Eat The Rich" (not a cover of the Motörhead song). The trouble is that we have so many to choose from that I really don't know what will end up on the album. But there will be a certain unity to the record, similar to that on "Pump" via the musical snippets that linked the tracks, although we won't use the same method. And we'll have some real funk on the record, plus all-out rockers, as well as slower and more moody numbers. I can confirm that Don Henley (ex-Eagle and fellow Geffen signee) has done some back-up vocals on one song, but I don't know whether it will be on the record.

"We also used a Polynesian drum troupe on "Eat The Rich". Steven even had the studio set up with palm trees and ferns to make them feel at home. We found them in Yellow Pages (ha ha)! No, they come from L.A. and Bruce found them. It was amazing watching them beating on logs in the studio."

Following the release of "Get A Grip", Aerosmith will once more head out on the road for a lengthy excursion, beginning soon after the long-awaited release. And Hamilton can't wait for it all to start over again.

"I'm so ready to go out on the road. At the end of the last tour, I was wasted. I couldn't even pass the closet where I keep my suitcases without feeling nauseous, but that feeling has long since long. Now I'm raring to go.

"We'll be doing a lot of European dates this time, because we have managed to build ourselves up over there. So, we're hoping to do more shows in countries like France and Italy, as well as visiting the Eastern Bloc."

Given the fact that Aerosmith won't finish on the road until mid-1994 and the further likelihood that the next studio album (their last for Geffen) probably won't appear until sometime in 1996 (maybe even later), what price their new recording contract with Columbia (signed a year ago for a reputed eight-figure sum!) elliciting any product before the year 2000?! For those of you confused, let me just point out that late last year the band signed a new deal which brings them back to Columbia (their label home throughout the '70s and early '80s), but only after they've released two more albums for Geffen. It's certainly unusual for any label to commit themselves so far in advance to any band. So, aren't Aerosmith's new paymasters taking an awful risk in signing up a band almost a decade before they can put any new records? Hamilton prefers to see it as a sign of confidence in the band.

"We've managed to get ourselves to a level as a group where a record company can readily accept such a deal. It's a vote of confidence in us. Of course, you never know what can go wrong, but I've a feeling that it won't feel that long before we are putting out an album for Columbia."

And the reversion to Columbia must also bring back memories of the old days (good/bad, depending on your viewpoint), when Aerosmith indulged in every known stimulant and suppressive substance - and probably discovered/manufactured a few as well, as they rode, swaggered and staggered triumphantly through such seminal albums as "Get Your Wings", "Rocks" and "Toys In The Attic". It's a past they have never hidden, nor shirked from facing in public. Indeed, some might say they have used interview situations in recent years rather *too* much as confessionals to previous sins. Moreover, many point to Aerosmith's public cleansing as the beginning of a trend that survives to this day - namely that hanging out at Alcoholics Anonymous meetings became de rigeur for groupies, record company executives and managerial personnel keen to converse with star performers.

Hamilton, though, is aware of the fact that the pressures which to some extent first drove the band into the arms of drugs dealers across the globe still exist as dangerously as ever. Only now, they have different ways of coping...

"Sure all the things that made us over-indulge in the past are still present - the pain, stress and frustration that comes from touring and recording. But, whereas before our way of dealing with it all came through oblivion, now we face up to the problems. Drink and drugs don't play a part in our lives at all these days - either through indulgence or avoidance. But we still relate to each other in the same way that we always did - only now we all have more even temperaments. We used to arrive in the studio in the old days with so many different types of hangover and the emotional hills and valleys we all went through were ridiculous.

"When we first all cleaned out together, everything did seem like a bed of roses. Then there was a period when we all had to adjust, but even if you get through that difficult time things still do not get any easier. As I said the problems which drove us that way in the first place are still there - and they always will be."

But certainly since their reunion some eight years ago, Tyler, Perry, Whitford, Hamilton and Kramer have shown a remarkable resilience and resistance to market forces that have swept away other transiently more successful, if lesser, bands. What's more, this is one reformation that has an astonishing triumph. Maybe it's because they didn't try to recapture the past, but have learnt how to use it as a springboard into the future. Their history isn't a crutch, as has been the case with so many others who have made the mistake of trying to recreate ancient glories, rather it's a foundation upon which to build new musical edifices. And with everybody in the band totally focused on Aerosmith (the only 'outside project' to have involved Hamilton in recent times was the adoption of a baby boy), I can certainly see them still gloriously strutting their stuff through to their 30th anniversary at the dawn of a new millenium! ∴

G YARNS

LEGIONNAIRE'S DISEASE

Calling all sensation-seekers, those who bathe in the excrement of others. Gather round, my pubescent pus piranhas *(Oh bloody hell Dome, where on earth do you get them! - Deputy Ed.)*. And listen. Carefully. What you are about to read is going to shock, horrify and amaze you. This isn't a feature for those faint of heart and weak of will. Those of you who are reviled by the smear of blood and the smell of ire should turn away. NOW. This is a story full of wretchedness, lust, savagery...Oh *really!*

Look, let's get one thing straightened out before we go any further. This meeting with Deicide bassist/vocalist Glen Benton never even touched upon his religious beliefs, nor where he stands in the realm and reem of metal. That subject has been culled to the point of extinction by other elements of the media - including the more yellowing tabloids. Is there really anything to be gained from another so-called investigation of Benton's principles and articles of faith? I think not. Personally, I'm completely satisfied to leave such journalism to others. What interests me is the man behind the shady myth. What fascinates me is a portrait of Glen Benton, not a caricature of the same. So, let's bound...

Sitting in the reclining offices of Roadrunner Records just off London's Harrow Road, Glen Benton cuts a striking figure. His eyes possess the perambulatory, spearing yet hypnotic ambience of a predator. Yet they also burst forth with a radiant intelligence and acumen. This is no slave to the trials and travails of trivia, but a formidable artist who, despite attempts by others to paint him as a diabolic personality, offers up a musical creed and credibility of absolute value. His deep voice is glazed with the laid-back intonations of his Florida home, yet also has the edge of maturity and sense. This is not a satanic buffoon. This is not the jester manipulated by visions of Beelzebub. Rather, this is a relaxed musician, at ease with himself and the world - hey, he evens laughs at regular intervals during this liaison! So, let's clean house and start off with a little musical interlude.

"I'll listen to anything," begins Benton, acquiescing on his musical tastes and values. "Like any other normal person, if someone gives me something to listen to, then I will give it a go. And usually, I'll end up analysing it. I do like tasteful stuff, and if something is done tastefully, then I will get into it.

"For the most part, though, I enjoy music I can relate to - and that is mainly heavy music. There are certain patterns of sounds that definitely do not appeal to me. They pinch the nerves at the back of the neck. It's music like this (he gesticulates towards a barely audible radio playing out the droning sonics of Top 40 teenybopdom). As for classical music, there are certain types I find astounding - it's so intense!

"I got right into the heavy stuff. In fact, the only music I can recall hearing before getting into HM was a Barry Manilow song being played on the radio when I was riding in a car with my parents as a kid. After that I jumped straight into anything heavy I could grab - stuff like Black Sabbath and Judas Priest. As with a lot of current metal musicians, I *did* listen to the bands from the New Wave Of British Heavy Metal, but personally I was always into harder, faster stuff. I liked the attitude and atmosphere of that music. Having the faster style in there helps to intensify the presentation. What Deicide is trying to do is recreate in a modern context the intensity bands like Sabbath originally had."

Clearly the recent, second Deicide album, "Legion", is one that underlines Benton's commitment to extremity. Yet it also has structured tonal imagery that occasionally borders on the orchestral. A remarkable achievement. An awesome album full of primitivism marinated within a surprisingly mature construction.

"Musically, we all listen to a lot of extreme metal bands. In fact, we're just like any other average American kids. But we've never mimicked anyone else. If anybody were to turn up to practise with something that sounded even remotely like anybody else, they know they'd get their ass ripped apart. We are our own harshest critics. Indeed, it's rarely happened that someone has turned up with an idea lifted from elsewhere; maybe that's occurred once and that was when one part of a song sounded like part of another of our songs! Brian (Hoffman - guitar) is famous for writing stuff that sounds like other material he's written, but that's because he has his own distinct style and sound. And this comes across when you compare the song "Repent To Die" from the recent record with "Deicide" (taken from the 1990 debut album of the same name). There is a similarity in the musical structure, because Brian wrote both, but the note structures are different.

"As a band we are really critical of each other. That's the way we create. If someone comes up with a song that's not heavy enough, then we'll work at it to get the sound right. Who knows? It might just need to be speeded up, or else have a certain part of the song altered in a subtle way, but we will work at it until the song feels right. Deicide is a combination of hard work, strong song-writing and a critical approach to everything we do."

For Deicide, fame has thus far come through the portals of a cult following and also via the notoriety stirred up because of publicity given to Benton's beliefs and quotes. It is a saddening aspect of rock music in the '90s that it relies so heavily on controversy for its marketability. And, as such it brings about a double-edged sword. On the one hand, it gains the band in question instant attention. Yet, on the other, it rarely takes into account the requirements for musical development and maturity. Instant acclaim or attention can often lead to immediate oblivion. Benton, however, is fully aware of Deicide's station.

"I think through all of what has happened the four of us (Benton, Hoffman, guitarist Eric Hoffman and drummer Steve Asheim) have been able to maintain a level-headedness. This is my only successful band. I've never stuck with anything else in the past on a musical level. Basically, when Deicide was put together I looked for the right people to get on with, people without any hang-ups. What Deicide has given me is job security. Not that we are even thinking of breaking up, but if that were to happen then I know all of us would get offers to join other bands as a result of what we have achieved. Mind you, the only way Deicide would break up is if one of us were to die.

"I think there are a lot of people who pick up on us through our reputation. Equally, though, we have a cult following who can't wait for any new product. And I think so far we've done rather well for ourselves. I've been told that our first album has sold somewhere between 100,000 and 150,000 copies. Of course, you have to take into account the fact that record labels like to fabricate things! If they tell you the band has sold 40,000 copies then it has probably done about 20,000. If they tell you it's 100,000, then it's certainly nearer to 50,000! But if I have sold 150,000 copies of "Deicide", then there should be a big royalty cheque in my mail box when I get home!

"The problems for us come because of the type of concepts we have. It's hard for us to get endorsements. The same with getting played on American radio. All you can do is stand back and flip 'em off! If a guitar case company won't give me an endorsement because of the satanic image, then that doesn't really bother me, because I'll save up the money and go out to buy a new one anyway! It just means that I have to wait a little longer. Sure, we'd love instrument endorsements. But at the moment we are all using Mesa Boogie, who don't endorse anyone anyway!"

For Benton, the business side of the band is also a crucial activity in his day-to-day life. Because the bassist/singer also manages the band. As far as he's concerned, there is no other way forward.

"If we don't get involved in this side of things, then we'd leave ourselves open to being ripped off very quickly! Sure, taking on responsibility for this side of things eats into my personal life, but there is no alternative. Actually, I'm thinking of designing a strap that will allow me to roam about the house with a wireless phone, yet with my hands free. If I could patent that, then I'd make a million dollars!

"I started out at the bottom learning all the legal terminology I needed to know how to manage a band, and I still have to keep up with what's going on in the legal and business world. But I am fully aware of the benefits it has for Deicide. If I didn't take on the job, then we'd have been ripped off long ago. And I would encourage other bands to take similar steps. All I would say to others is: watch out, because anyone who knows they can make money from you, without you realising, is gonna take you for a ride!"

Being part of the legendary Florida death metal scene, Deicide are inevitably a crucial link in a grapevine that disseminates information and fuels the extreme metal flux - something that can act as an early warning system in a business sense as well as throwing out worthy gossip! Benton sees himself as on the periphery of such tactics, yet appreciates its presence.

"All the Florida bands talk once in a while. I pretty much stay out of society because I'm a recluse. But when I see people from other bands I talk to them for a few minutes. Quite honestly, the Florida death metal scene is dying down now *(Bad pun no. 467! - Ed.)*, although I'm sure there is a whole crop of young bands in the area still trying to break through. But I have never thought of Deicide as strictly death metal. When I think of that genre then the names which come to mind are the likes of Dark Angel and Obituary. No, if someone who sees me in a grocery store pushing a trolley along comes up and says *Hey, what kinda band are you in?* then I'd say it was a satanic death metal band!

"Actually, talking about grocery stores, people are prepared to pay good money to accompany me to the supermarket on a Sunday afternoon. That's when all the old people are out doing their shopping. I walk around the aisles real slow...Basically, I let the other shoppers go home and just think about what they saw at the supermarket!"

The scenario of Glen Benton walking around the Floridian equivalent of Tesco's seems tailor-made for a future video. But at the moment, if there is to be a Deicide promotional shoot it will be for the song "Dead But Dreaming".

"Well, I hope to do something for that song, but it all depends on what kind of record company politics I have to deal with to get an approved budget. But I promise you that anything we do will be done in good taste. One reason for this is that in the US you have to be subliminal in everything you do, or else the authorities will be on your back."

Personally, I would be fascinated to see a band like Deicide translating their extreme music into an extreme visual format. Isn't it about time that someone capped Michael Jackson at his own game and filmed a horror video that took its inspiration from the gore rationale of such

GLEN BENTON

Is DEICIDE mainman Glen Benton a publicity-seeking lunatic? Is he a deranged, foetus-gobbling idiot? As the band tour the UK, MALCOLM DOME finds another, surprising side to the man

DEICIDE (L-R): STEVE ASHIEM, ERIC HOFFMAN, BRIAN HOFFMAN and GLEN BENTON

cult directors as Buttgereit? Mere mention of the horror genre is sufficient to send Benton quivering into a state of ecstacy. This man likes his films extreme!

"I love cannibal movies. Me and Chris Barnes (Cannibal Corpse vocalist) get along quite well in this respect. We have been known to lay out with big smiles on our faces watching cannibal videos like a couple of crazy men. I've seen some real butchery in them. There's one film I should mention called *The Emerald Jungle* which was amazing. Don't get it confused with John Boorman's *The Emerald Forest*, which was mellow and all Hollywood. No, this one is a cult flick that is so fucking real and graphic. I was left in complete awe. They were cutting breasts off and it was completely insane. The movie was shot in the Amazon Jungle and there were Pygmies running around eating everybody - unreal. (For film buffs, it should be noted that *The Emerald Jungle* was made in 1980 by director Umberto Lenzi and was also titled *Eaten Alive By the Cannibals* - note, this film is currently available, in cut form as *Eaten Alive* on the Vipco label).

"My copy of that film is a bootleg. There's a guy I know who videoed it off a satellite TV station and gave me a copy. I've watched it six times so far. The *Faces Of Death* series of films (explicit and graphic footage supposedly depicting real death and maiming. There are five volumes on release, but they're banned in over 40 countries - including the UK), that's also cool. But Francis P. Gross, who originally introduced and narrated the films, isn't there anymore, which is a shame. The movies are done by completely new people. Sure, they're still graphic, but without Francis...Well, it's not the same. He's the sort of individual you wanna sit down with, have a beer and just rap! *Faces Of Death* movies, though, are just classic. To people like myself they are the equivalent of Humphrey Bogart movies to the average person!

"I've seen some Japanese stuff in the horror vein that's just totally unreal. There was one torture film where little white letters came across the screen stating that this was 'Sample Only'. But there was enough being shown! It had people being buried in the dirt and then being pissed on. Totally Over The Top. You're almost there getting beaten. The Japanese are quite creative!

"These films are easy to find through tape traders, although some of them are freely available in the local video store. But for the most part censorship stops their ready availability. But the tape traders don't even charge you! We've got a network of friends across America who are constantly receiving and buying these films. They lend them to their closest friends for nothing. All it takes is a couple of phone calls and we can get whatever kind of stuff we want. So, when anyone gets hold of a new video of somebody dying or killing themselves, whenever something new comes into the sector, we all put our names on the waiting list!"

Doubtless there will be many readers reaching for the sick bag, heaving merely from Benton's descriptions above. But, wait, before you condemn such films out of hand, consider the hypocrisy of a society that takes it upon itself to deride, decry and generally root out such so-called 'nasties', whilst also revelling in TV news coverage of disaster and pain. The irony and black humour of the situation certainly isn't lost on Benton.

"Whenever a catastrophe or accident happens in America, it's very quickly on prime-time TV, and the next thing you know it's being made into a TV film, with Valerie Bertinelli or Farah Fawcett playing somebody being burnt up in bed! When my old lady watches one of these programmes, I just sit there and shit and giggle. It's really funny. Like I said, in America you have to be subliminal in everything you do, or else the authorities will be on your back."

But let's return to music for a while. As a touring, travelling musician established among the hierarchy of the death-associated genre, Benton finds himself a target for many young bands, aspiring to reach the heights already achieved by Deicide. Thus he, like most musicians, does receive demo tapes on the road. Yet, unlike many of his contemporaries, these aren't consigned to the nearest bin.

"If I get a tape from a band that sounds good then I'll pass it on to my label. And at some point in the future I'd like to get into production with bands outside of Deicide. I have come across bands whom I'd like to work with, but they're all doing their own thing and wouldn't want outside interference. And I can understand that, because Deicide wouldn't want someone walking in and saying *Hey, I'm gonna produce you!* You have to have a certain mentality to do that. I consider a producer to be someone who controls the money and creates the sounds. With Deicide we create the sound, because nobody outside of the four of us knows exactly what sound we want. We don't need a producer, just someone who can technically interpret what we require."

And that interpretation has provided this band with a diabolic sound all its own - and certainly at odds with the laid-back, comforting ultra-violet flirtations most inhabitants of Florida spend their time in pursuing. Yet despite being ensconsed in Florida, none of the Deicide folk were actually born in the sunshine state. Like most musicians from the area, they migrated from elsewhere.

"Well, Eric was born in France, before moving to Seattle. Brian was born in Seattle. Steve comes from New Jersey. All of us come from families who moved around a lot. I'm originally from Buffalo, Upstate New York. My family moved to Florida, then back to New York, then back to Florida, then back to New York, then back to Florida...When I was 16 I said *See ya. You guys wanna travel? Take care. I'm staying here in Florida.* I'm quite happy living there. I only have my wife and son (Daemon) with me, no other members of my family. But I go and see my parents once a year and that's enough for me."

What I have tried to offer here is a glimpse at the many facets of Glen Benton far removed from the merely satanic personality offered up by most writers and magazines in a one-dimensional portrayal of the man as a beast with a bass, a demon on a decibel heat. Glen Benton is a talented, extreme metal musician with more intelligence and insight than he is given credit for. I wouldn't suggest that he doesn't have a very dark side to his personality - perhaps even a slight mental perversion - but then I would strongly suggest that this is true of many of us. It's just that Benton, as a public figure, has come in for more negative scrutiny than most. And to those who find much of what he stands for distasteful, I would just say this: there are people in the world who find all forms of rock music (from Giant to Deicide) an abomination. Censor Benton and you might as well cut out your own tongue. ☘

DEICIDE play London Astoria Theatre on December 17.

TAKING THE SCENIC ROUTE

Megadeth guitarist MARTY FRIEDMAN has recorded a solo album...And it isn't full of widdly-widdly nonsense! A shocked MALCOLM DOME tackles the issue

Marty Friedman. Megadeth's lead guitarist. He used to be with Cacophony, Hawaii, Vixen (not the all-girl mob). He's been involved with renowned guitar den Shrapnel Records for a number of years. So you know what his latest solo effort is gonna sound like, don't you?! Oh no you don't!

Marty Friedman's new studio record, "Scenes", is a gentle, lustrous, ambient masterpiece that owes more to new age stylings than the rampant fretboard friction burns mostly associated with rock guitarist and their solo outings. As such, it comes as a welcome and pleasant change. As much, I suspect, for Friedman as for the listener.

"I'm getting a lot more focused these days in doing what I want. Before I joined Megadeth I felt that I had to throw everything into an album (one with Hawaii, two with Cacophony and a solo outing called "Dragon's Kiss") from rock to blues to country, just to show that I could do it. But being in Megadeth allows me to get my rocks off on metal music, which I thoroughly enjoy. But it also gives me is the opportunity to focus more on one type of music when it comes to my solo career. And that's what I've done here."

Talking from the Denver, Colorado as the Megadeth multi-platinum wheel spins ever onwards on a sold-out arena tour of the States, Friedman sounds confident about his new venture, whatever the eventual commercial outcome.

"It's an album I'm satisfied with. And although I had to make it when I could find time, I wouldn't change anything about it. I made it for myself. I know it's not good business sense, but it doesn't matter to me if nobody buys it. I have a good feeling about "Scenes" and I'm happy to have it in my CD collection!

"A lot of Megadeth fans will wonder what the hell I'm on about on this record, but, hey, I'm being selfish about it. The guys in Megadeth have heard it and...Well Nick (Menza - drums) is on the album. And the Daves (guitarist/vocalist Mustaine and bassist Ellefson) like it, which matters a lot to me, because I respect their opinion. Dave Mustaine thinks it sounds like the soundtrack to a martial arts movie, whcih is cool."

Maybe the overt eastern influences on "Scenes" have a lot to do with this last comparison. Friedman openly admits to listening for pleasure to Indian, Chinese and Japanese music (as well as bootleg studio outtakes of Elvis Presley). It also may have something to do with his interest in soundtrack music.

"I'm really not as much into soundtrack music as I'd like to be. But I respect the art form. Sometimes the music comes across as being better than the film. Soundtracks are something that I would love to do; maybe with a little guidance I could get into it. I admire Philip Glass as a composer of movie soundtracks, and I also like the music for Westerns. The atmosphere it can create for big, open scenes, or the triumphant cowboys riding across the screen."

But beyond these influences, perhaps one man is almost as heavily involved in this project as Friedman himself - Japanese keyboards wizard Kitaro, a man whose music so envelopes the new age genre. Kitaro's style is heard throughout this work, and his physical presence adds a certain distinctive lustre to the project. The Megadeth guitarist is an unashamed fan of the maestro, and this unique liaison goes back a couple of years, to the beginning of the "Rust In Peace" tour, Friedman's first with the 'Deth.

"We were rehearsing next door to Kitaro for two months. I'd been a fan of his for some five years and was simply awestruck by the prospect of meeting him. Anyway, on the last day we were rehearsing I plucked up the courage to introduce myself to him and he was really cool. But I spent ages talking to his keyboard player Brian BecVar and became very friendly with him."

BecVar appears on the album, but it was a mutual friend of Kitaro and Friedman who suggested that the pair should collaborate on "Scenes".

"To my surprise he agreed to do it - without hearing *any* of my demos. I honestly thought that he'd be so busy that there would be no time for him to work with me. Besides, once he found out what band I was in he was bound to turn down the idea. But there must have been some sort of mental telepathy going on, because he accepted the proposal. I must admit that given my busy schedule I would *never* have thought of working on a project with someone *I* hardly know!"

What makes the liaison even stranger is that Kitaro worked on tapes sent to him in his Colorado studio, whilst Friedman beavered away in Los Angeles. They never spent time together in the same studio!

"We talked on the phone, and an engineer mediated. In a way, what I was doing was set up perfectly for him to add his trademark touches. And I loved almost every idea he came up with. But then that's the sort of faith I have in the man. He is a genius and I had no problems with trusting him to do what he wanted."

Whether Friedman will have time to fully promote the album and to actually take it out on the road is a moot point, given the intense schedule he faces with Megadeth. Personally, I feel it would be a tragedy for such a remarkable piece of work to get lost in the shuffle into '93 and the high profile of Mustaine & Co. However, Friedman at least can rest confident in the knowledge that what he has given to the world is an album that does him justice - and also will do nothing if not enhance Kitaro's worthy reputation. Marty has shown that it *is* indeed more than possible to make a guitar-based album that doesn't rely on technique over feel, melody and atmosphere. In doing so, he has displayed more respect for his art than a million speed kings. ∴

"Scenes" is available through Shrapnel/Roadrunner.

QUICK NURSE, THE SCREENS!

Irish trio THERAPY? have been causing a stir with their unique brand of noise-based rock. So are we about to see an explosion of Dublin bands in their wake. DENISE STILLIE finds out from bassist Michael McKeegan

"He's just getting himself together..." muses a rather rough-sounding Andy Cairns, guitarist/vocalist with Ireland's latest exponents Therapy?, when he answers the phone at his Dublin hotel. The party in question is the band's bassist Michael McKeegan.

"He's just kicking three models out of bed and polishing off a bottle of Jack Daniel's."

Yeah, right! Andy dissolves into fits of laughter at the sheer crassness of that remark. It would appear that *The High Life* isn't sitting too well with Michael; he sounds worn out when he picks up the receiver. This, he assures me, is due to the onset of *'flu*, brought on by the band's excessively heavy work schedule, rather than any late night *antics*.

The three-piece, also featuring drummer Fyfe Ewing, have just returned from two-and-a-half weeks in the States, where they played a series of dates as well as joining the promotional hurly-burley.

Michael admits that their time in America was "hard work at times, plus everybody started getting sick with things like alcoholic poisoning."

The band, who've just released their first album ("Nurse") for A&M, began life back in 1989. Andy and Fyfe knew each other from a local gig called The Tredmill, inviting Michael (who knew Fyfe from school) to join them, after they'd recorded a demo. In the space of a year, they'd set up their own label, Multi Fucking National, saved up their pennies and pressed up 1,000 copies of their first single, "Meat Abstract", which was sold at their gigs.

So, is there much a music scene in Dublin?

"Yeah, there is," says Michael, "but it's more traditional stadium rock than anything else. There are not a lot of bands like ourselves. There are some good bands coming out now, but they only seem to last for a year."

Do many of the bands make it to the mainland?

"It's really weird, the whole concept of getting the ferry across to the mainland seems very alien to them. None of these bands make it to Britain."

Is it easy to get noticed if you stick to Ireland?

"Not really. We did a single on our own label and loads of other things. But nothing really happened for so long."

Even as far back as the aforementioned debut vinyl outing, the band were picking up interest from Radio One DJ John Peel and American college radio stations. And then they signed to the Wiiija label...

"Well, that's our famous fairy tale," sparkles Michael, an air of disbelief in his voice. "Andy and I went over to Glasgow to see the Revolting Cocks. Silverfish were supporting and we gave their vocalist Lesley a tape, which she passed on to Wiiija (to whom Silverfish were signed at the time). That was on Saturday. They phoned us up on the following Monday and basically said *Can we release this?"*

Ironic, really, as the label had rejected Therapy?'s first single!

"We were really taken aback, especially after we ended up doing that two-track seven inch single on our own label. We thought *That's it, we'll definitely get signed. This is really good.* But no-one picked up on it! So, we did another five tracks and thought *My god, this is really good. We're gonna put this out on our own label.*

"So, yeah, we were quite surprised by Wiiija's interest, because we had resigned ourselves to the fact that we'd have to release the tape ourselves."

Thus, "Babyteeth" was born, being a hideous noise monster, comprising their five-track demo, with the added attraction of "Meat Abstract". No re-recording, no polishing. Straight out and straight to the top of the indie charts, where it resided for over a month. Also spawned from their time with Wiiija was a mini-album, "Pleasure Death", the sound of wanton destruction ridden over by venomous samples. This was released earlier this year.

It was about then that the major labels started sniffing around. At one point it seemed the trio were being hounded by a large pack of rabid A&R men. But they took this all in their stride.

"Yeah, there were loads of them around us. It was really weird. We were in Europe at the time and at every gig there was always some guy from a major record label introducing themselves. Most were, to be totally honest, wankers. Actually, the first time we met A&M...We were really bad. We were all in a really bad mood and really pissed him off. He didn't even stay for the gig, despite flying all the way over. So we thought *Right A&M - we've blown it. We're outta the window.* They didn't kiss our asses or anything, which was good. We had quite a lot of respect for them.

"They asked us to come over to London and meet them again. So we went over and they just seemed so *normal* compared to all the other twats we'd met. Some of those guys were horrendously over the top and they just didn't know what they were talking about! None of them knew much about the band and thought *Three-piece with noisy guitars - Oh my god, they must be Nirvana!* A few of them thought we were like a metal band as well. They thought they could turn us into Metallica. In the end, A&M said *You've got good ideas and you know what you're doing. We can give you a bit more financial security. They let you do what you want really - and give you some money for it. Well,* so far it's worked out like that."

Artistic control was one of the band's main priorities when looking to be signed. So, have A&M lived up to their word and not tried to manipulate them?

"We told them that we didn't anyone from the label down at the studio when we recorded. We said we didn't want them there when we shot the video, because we knew exactly what we wanted. They were really good and didn't interfere at all. They trusted us and we trusted them."

Therapy? don't fit readily into any musical box and A&M, at least in this country, are not exactly famed for signing acts too far off the mainstream path. They would appear strange bedfellow indeed.

"That was another reason we thought it be good, because they didn't have this roster of ten similar bands where we'd be tenth in priority. I think an awful lot of people there like us, because we're so different and we don't take ourselves too seriously. We're not sensitive *artistes* who get upset and throw tantrums. A lot of people there quite enjoy working with us - they always find excuses to come and hang out with us. The American side is a bit different; they've got Soundgarden, Monster Magnet, The Dough Boys and Daisy Chainsaw signed up, so they're building up more of an alternative roster."

The band have been gaining momentum with every release. As such, people's expectations have been rising as well, with the inevitable comparisons to the grunge genre. However, Therapy? take exception to being compared to the US grunge scene.

"When we were recording "Nurse", people kept mentioned this American band from Seattle whose name begins with an *N*. That was really annoying, because personally I don't think we sound anything like them. We're not one of those American grunge bands. This word *grunge* really winds me up - people always say things on our behalf and it annoys me, because we never claimed that we would be *The Next Big Thing*.

"I don't mind claiming anything ourselves, and if it doesn't work out then that's fair enough! A lot of people hype you up, which annoys me because we never *planned* any of this - it just happened. That's the way we work, things just sort of happen, be they good or bad. It was a

THERAPY? (L-R): FYFE EWING, ANDY CAIRNS and MICHAEL McKEENAN

bit annoying, but when people hear the album they will realise we are more than a run-of-the-mill American noise band."

Recorded at Loco Studios in Wales over a two-week period (a time-span which, incidentally, Michael considers "surprisingly long" for the band as their previous two albums were recorded in just two days!), "Nurse" was produced by Harvey Burrell. He's the band's sound engineer for live shows, who's also worked in the studio with Silverfish, Snuff, Senseless Things and The Thrill Kill Kult. Looking back, Michael says of their time in the studio:

"On this album, because we had the money to do it properly we thought we wouldn't compromise on *anything*, we wouldn't rush through things. We just did exactly what we wanted and took our time over it. We just did everything that we wanted to do on our previous records - just properly this time!

"Even with the other two albums, when I listened back I always think *It could have been better*. My theory with albums is that it's the band at a certain point in time - with a *budget* and a certain attitude, and that's it. Albums should be taken in the context of what state the band were in when it was recorded. "Nurse" has definitely come closest to capturing the Therapy? sound."

"Teethgrinder", the first single from the album, entered the national charts at Number 30. Therapy? also found themselves in a peculiar spot on ITV's *The Chart Show*.

"We were in the rock chart, which made us laugh. It must have been because we are on A&M that they didn't put it in the indie chart. We were in there with Thunder and things like that, which is quite good, I suppose.

"That song itself came about, because when we were writing songs for the album we were watching lots of videos to get ideas. Andy taped this programme on Channel 4, made by a girl who just interviewed her friends. There was one person in particular who had this habit of grinding her teeth in her sleep. She ground her teeth right down - it was a stress-related thing."

On a wider viewpoint, Therapy?'s rise might well turn their home town of Dublin into the new Seattle, overrun with record company people and music paper journalists.

"Well, I know from what our A&R guy at the record label has been saying that there are a few people sniffing around the city. I think some band from Kilkelly got signed to a major label, but they've only recorded one demo. I think that's pretty terrifying for both the band *and* the label.

"I hope that Dublin doesn't become the new Seattle. Otherwise, it will turn out like Manchester, signing all the dross of the day. You get bands who haven't even done a demo on the front covers of the music papers. *That* would be horrible!"

It surely would! ☘

"Nurse" is available through A&M.

All those wasted years

Often hailed as pioneers of thrash metal, VENOM are back with a more mature album called "The Waste Lands". MALCOLM DOME tackles drummer Abaddon and bassist/vocalist The Demolition Man

VENOM (clockwise, from extreme right): MANTAS, ABADDON, STEVE WHITE and THE DEMOLITION MAN

The New Wave Of British Heavy Metal is often seen as the zeitgeist of the the '80s. A movement so influential and inspired that it transformed metal into a magical, neon-lit musical paradise. Actually, that is rather overstating the case. However, out of its loins were sired two bands who have indeed had a remarkable impact on all that has subsequently followed - an impact, indeed, that is out of all proportion to their commercial success. One of the pair is Stourbridge band Diamond Head. The other is Venom. The former shall inevitably be considered in the coming months. It is the latter, though, who concern us now.

Formed in 1979, Venom are always regarded as the template upon which thrash/death/speed/black metal was developed. And their first two albums, "Welcome To Hell" (1981) and "Black Metal" (1982), certainly were raw, savage indictments of the music scene back then. Full of spit and spirit. And the primitive production even added to their legend. However, in the ten years since, the band seem to have been left behind. Through albums such as "At War With Satan" ('83), "Possessed" ('85), "Calm Before The Storm" ('87), "Prime Evil" ('89), "Tear Your Soul Apart" ('90) and "Temples Of Ice" ('91), they struggled to regain their composure and equilibrium. Musicians came and went. It seemed that circumstances and attitudes had left the band behind, consigned forever in the role of pioneers out of synch with contemporary opinion.

"I think we have stayed underground," agrees ever-present drummer/founder-member Abaddon. "That has been our strength. I don't honestly believe that anyone now regards us as the grandfathers of thrash. Let's face it, people still talk about Blue Cheer's "Vincebus Eruptum" album (1967) and the MC5 stuff as being influential on thrash, but nobody talks about them being old!

"To a large extent, people listen to new bands, think they're good and then somebody suggests they should listen to Venom, who began it all. It's a thinning out process. I used to listen to Deep Purple and Ritchie Blackmore would claim that he nicked most of his guitar licks from Jimi Hendrix. So, I'd check him out - same thing really!"

"People in Europe are still expecting us to show death and black metal bands how to do it properly," adds bassist/vocalist The Demolition Man (aka. former Atomkraft member Tony Dolan). "But when "Welcome To Hell" and "Black Metal" came out, the guys in Venom (Abaddon, bassist/vocalist Cronos and guitarist Mantas) were 20-year-olds. You can't expect the band ten years on to still be doing the same sort of of thing, can you? You have to allow for growth, whilst keeping the basic identity. And if you look at bands like Cannibal Corpse and Deicide, do you think *they'll* still be making the same type of music in ten years' time as they are now? Of course not!"

The problem is that Venom's impact was retrospectively so huge that there are those who find their recent output difficult to accept. However, with new album "The Waste Lands" (wherein The Demo Man, Abaddon and Mantas are joined by guitarist Steve White) the band at last seem comfortable with the more studied, power metal direction they have been following assiduously since "At War...". Now, they seem at ease with the music, the direction and (most importantly) Kevin Ridley's production.

"With Cronos in the band, what let us down was the production," admits Abaddon. "He wanted to be a producer and so it was all hands on the toys! But he wasn't any good at it; that led to conflict between him and me. Really, he should have left production to the engineer (Keith Nichol). It all came to a head with "At War...". It was a great piece of music that needed a great production, and that never happened. We should have had an album to blow away Rainbow, Deep Purple or Motörhead.

"I would personally chop off everything after "At War..." until "Prime Evil", then go back and re-do "At War...". Then I'd be happy. But I reckon that we have made five good albums ("Welcome To Hell", "Black Metal", "At War With Satan", "Prime Evil" and "The Waste Lands") in ten years. That's not bad, is it? Bowie only made one good album in that time!"

"I think we were comfortable making this album," says The Demo Man. "I think we got scared on "Temples...", which is why it wasn't very good..."

"We were led into a false sense of security on that one," interjects Abaddon. "The "Tear Your Soul Apart" mini album got great reviews and we made the mistake of not following our own instincts, but trying to repeat what had made that so popular. But the strange thing is that now people are hailing "Prime Evil" as a great album, whereas when we originally put that out people felt it paled alongside "Black Metal"! When am I gonna catch myself up?!"

So, can Venom defy the laws of nature and revive a career which still lies very much in past deeds? Certainly, the quality of "The Waste Lands" suggests they deserve a chance, as does their healthy appetite for touring. Recent excursions on a club level have proven there is an audience for the modern Venom out there ("some of our fans only got into the band at the time of "Prime Evil", you know," says The Demo Man) and that the foursome don't need a massive stage set. Moreover, they have recently re-recorded some of the best-loved early material for an LP titled "Kissing The Beast", set for release in Russia only ("It provides a link between the old and the new," explains the singer), just to show that they *can* translate their past triumphs into a '90s context.

However, rumours persist that the original line-up of Cronos, Mantas and Abaddon are about to reform, small fortunes being offered to tempt them into such an alliance. The drummer, though, sees it this way:

"Yes, we have been offered enormous sums to get back with Cronos. But this line-up is comfortable and strong. Why would I want to compromise it just for a couple of quid? It would be like painting the Mona Lisa, then going back to put a red nose on her! No thanks."

So, do Venom belong to a bygone era? Or is there a real future for them? "The Waste Lands" suggest the latter. However, the ultimate decision rests with you. ☘

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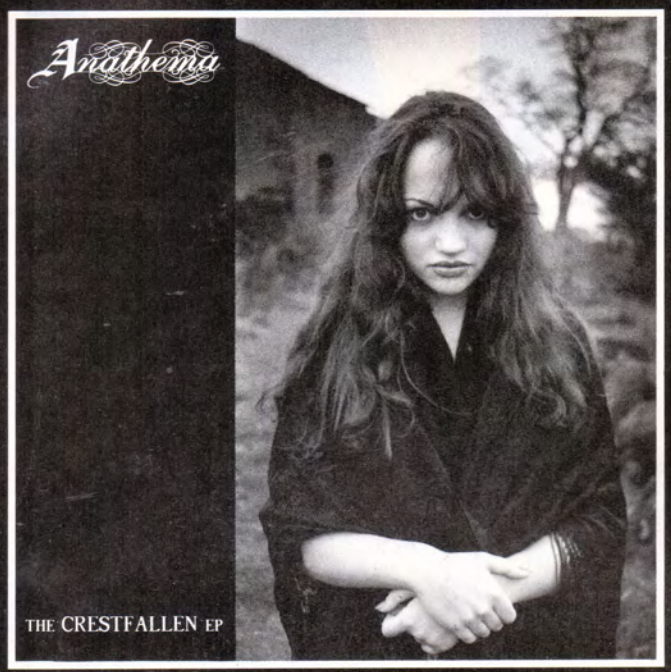

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Oh No, It's... STAT

Again and again and again they come back to haunt those who once wore flared blue jeans and never washed they're hair. Oh no! cries JERRY EWING. It's STATUS QUO

About as far removed from credibility these days as Crystal Palace are from success on the field of football, Status Quo are the anathema of almost all quarters of the rock press. Whilst other hardy veterans continue to make fools of themselves with line-ups fluctuating as wildly as their hairlines, the Quo, as they are/were (delete where applicable) affectionately known, roll on relentlessly, releasing albums that are derided by the masses, offering up little in the way of a challenge or concessions to moving trends.

Some cry foul, because Quo aren't the rock band of yesteryear (and let's face it, it *was* yesteryear), others have frequently looked for a little more than the three-chord orientated boogie they dabble/dabbled (once more delete, etc...) in, and some just thought all their songs sounded the same.

But the crowds still flock in droves to see Status Quo! Like lemmings taking that final fling off the cliff edge, so the Quo Army, a little greyer and rougher around the edges perhaps, turn out religiously to see their charges. Allowing the band a chance to hoist a middle finger aloft to their detractors (of which, it would appear there are many).

Quite why so many people should want to attend the same concert that they've been seeing for the last few years is beyond many. That their recent albums ("Perfect Remedy"/"Rock 'Til You Drop") have been less than appealing has resulted in both fewer sales and accusations that they've *lost it!*

That mind-numbing medleys are the only sort of Quo singles which chart these days adds both fuel to that particular fire and pays testament to the fact their audience are less than intelligent in their favoured musical choice. Still, if it keeps them happy...

Status Quo have just released yet another live record, "Live Alive Quo" (their first for Polydor), featuring one side of recent *hits*, and one of their now favoured medleys. And they're back out on the road for their traditional pre-Christmas jaunt.

Status Quo have been going since 1967. Francis Rossi has been at it since 1962. After 30 years, surely he must be a bit fed up by now!

"Yeah, of course," he replies, ever the chirpy cockernee chappy! "Especially this tour. It seems like we've been going for 15 or 16 months. After the show, there's that wonderful feeling of relief. We sit down, have a chat, play some cards and there's that feeling that you can do it forever.

"When you wake up in the morning, you think you *can't* do it again tonight. It's hard to get that feeling back. It gets harder and it's more important. But whatever it takes, you know. Because when you're onstage it's still the best thing you can have. Then you think you can do it forever. It's only in the cold light of day that you think it's too much."

Surely not this from the Quo. That it's too much. But the Quo are supposed to come back, again and again and again.

"When we were touring in the late '60s and early '70s we used to sit in the back of cars and think about the future," retorts the frontman. "We thought there'd be floating cars - that was fuckin' wrong. And then by that time they should've invented a time machine like the Tardis, so you could walk off the back of the stage, *Thank you, good night*, arm in the air, straight into the time machine and straight into your shower at home. That means I could still be at home at the moment, I could leave in a couple of hours."

Francis Rossi, ever the comedian. The man who's been getting crowds of six to 60 to wave their arms in the air like idiots and enjoy it for years!

"It's a bit strange!"

No, really.

"Well," he smiles, "we are a bit strange. I think so."

One day Status Quo are going to set off on their annual tour - only to find no-one else has bothered to turn up! What then?

"I'm always worried about that," he declares. "I've been worried about that ever since "...Matchstick Men" (1968). So far I've been lucky. You know those dreams you used to have when you were a kid, and you'd turn up at school without your trousers?"

Er, no, not really.

"Well, those sort of dream, where you dream it's all gone wrong. All these dreams you have before the event, and then you just slot back into it all. I suppose we're lucky really."

Yes, one would have thought so. After all, Status Quo can still command sell-out audiences without really having to push themselves in the studio anymore.

"Well, the audience must be getting something they like," Rossi points out, quite correctly. But then again, *The Sun* sells four million copies a day. It's worth thinking about, if you get my drift. "Whether it's the simplicity of the music, without wishing to be too big-headed, or there's an honesty about the band that people like.

"If we sell two million albums in England, which is extremely rare, it means 58 million people don't give a fuck. I find that really good and levelling. I don't really want to question it because there's not much else I want to do. I never wanted to do anything else, and if it all fell apart tomorrow I'd be gutted.

"When I was younger I used to say I wouldn't play to half-empty halls. But I'm older now and I look at it in a different way. A half-empty hall is a half-full hall."

It's also a pointer to the fact that maybe you're not as popular as you used to be.

"Who am I to say I'm too good to play to whatever," he claims. "Whether it's 3,000 or 4,000 in an 8,000-seater. It's half-full. We look at the 'plus' side. It's why we tend to smile a lot onstage. It's very easy to go onstage looking like you don't care. But I think we throw something offstage that makes the audience think we care.

"It used to be uncool when I was younger, smiling onstage. Somebody somewhere out there, I know I am, must be getting fed up with all these people in showbusiness who go onstage with these incredibly moody expressions, like they mean so much in the world. I mean, if you look at the biggest, Jackson or Madonna, they're lucky if they do 30 million in the States. So that means that 220 million-odd people don't know who the fuck they are. That's the reality of the situation."

Another reality is "Live Alive Quo". Another bloody live album and a far cry from the fondly remembered "Status Quo Live". Do you think the public really need this?

"I think we were more or less got forced into it," he

US QUO!

RICK PARFITT (LEFT) and FRANCIS ROSSI

claims. "If you'd have asked me three or four months ago, if we'd have had any new product out I'd have said no. And then suddenly we had a live album out and a live single. It was all to do with that Radio One show we did (Radio One's 25th Anniversary bash). It's like making a silk purse out of a sow's ear really! Most people have got that stuff, so I don't really want to talk about the bloody thing."

Fair comment indeed.

"Actually, one thing I will say is that it's got no dubbing on it," he claims, returning immediately to this once taboo subject. "The last album we did with no overdubbing was messy as hell, but this sounds good. We're a much better band now."

You've had plenty of practice.

"I actually practice now," he reveals. It would seem that Rossi Jr. is a guitarist too, and a tad better than *Pops*, which has prompted both Francis Rossi and his Quo mainstay Rick Parfitt into practicing regularly these days. Who would have thought it!

"I read this interview with some guy from Guns n' Roses saying they never needed to practice, because they knew what they need to play," continues Rossi the muso. "I remember saying that and it's bollocks. I practice two hours a day and that's every day. I'm interested now in playing my instrument better now that I used to be."

The press have, as one probably would have expected, been less than kind to "Live Alive Quo". In fact, it seems to have been on a downer since "Perfect Remedy".

"Oh, you're being very observant," he snaps. "I always thought "Perfect Remedy" was a good album material-wise. Maybe for fire and production and feel-wise within the band it wasn't very good. The "Rock 'Til You Drop" album I thought was excellent. A lot of people rate it as

STATUS QUO '92 (L-R): JOHN EDWARDS, RICK PARFITT, ANDY BOWN, JEFF RICH and FRANCIS ROSSI

the best album we've done since "Blue For You" (1976), which is basically what we're trying to get back to."

A lot of people would think otherwise.

"I dunno," he sighs. "There's a problem in England.. How do I say this without getting myself into trouble. There's a certain organisation who feel we no longer suit their...Whoops...

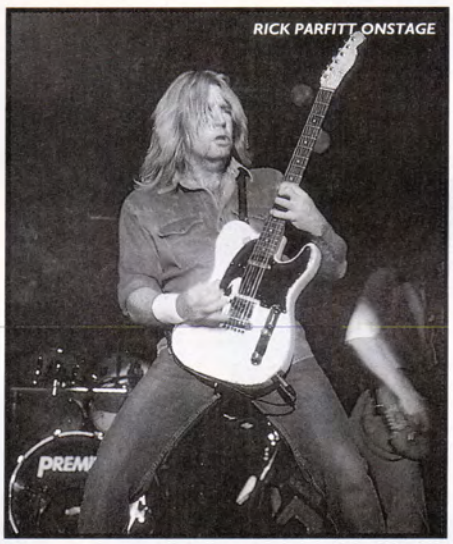
"Anyway, a lot of people call us passé. But we're not. At least I don't think so."

It must get to you though, constantly being told, like I've done, that you're not as good as you used to be.

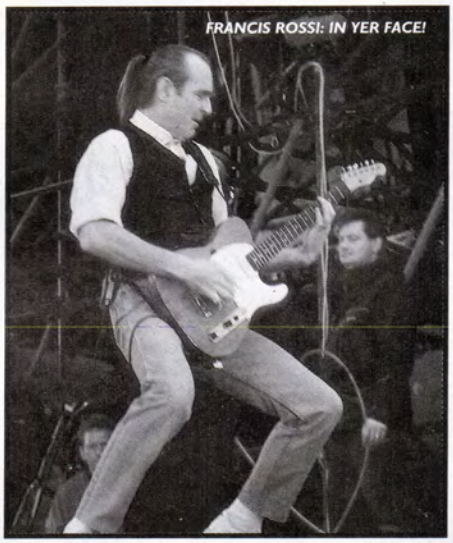
"It does to a degree," he states. "But since we've done the "Rock 'Til You Drop" album...I always play an album a year afterwards to see if I feel the same way about it, and usually I don't. But with this one I do. We definitely recorded it the right way and it's got more of the raunch and whatever of the earlier albums."

Surely "Rock 'Til You Drop" can't be held in the same light as albums that were revered in the '70s. Records like "Blue For You", "Hello" and "On The Level"?

"No," he agrees, after a pause. "But I don't see those albums as classics. They're a fuckin' mess. They had a certain amount of feel to them, though."



RICK PARFITT ONSTAGE



FRANCIS ROSSI: IN YER FACE!

What? I stand aghast. Mr. Quo telling the world that three of the band's No.One albums are a *Fuckin' mess!* But weren't Status Quo **the** archetypal British hard rock act of the '70s?

"Well yes, but only because I think it was simple and people could associate with it," he points out. "People could relate. They could play the simple three or five-chord tricks. I guess they felt they could do it too."

But from being hailed as **the** band of the '70s, now Status Quo are an *institution*. Not really the same thing.

He lets out a long, weary sigh. He's heard this one before, I'll wager.

"When you say an institution as you said it it get's to me. I saw this programme the other day about *Rolling Stone* magazine. When that started it was anti everything. Now today's new so-called musicians, Nirvana...He (Kurt Cobain) wore this T-shirt saying *Corporate Magazines Suck*. So what he wants is to be in every magazine that no-one buys. That doesn't make sense.

"It's like with us as a band. We struggle for years to get out of the clubs, we get out of the clubs and then you're asked if you want to go back to clubs. No I fuckin' don't! We were angry young men, we were against the grain, we were anti-establishment. But obviously that's going to become the norm if you give it to them enough. The Stones are hardly anti-things these days."

Yes, but both they and Status Quo are old men living off a reputation. There are plenty of angry young men out there ready to be anti-whatever.

"Yes," he agrees, "but if you're still doing it at 40 then you're pretending. Status Quo have never really pretended. For us to do it like we were young men would be bollocks. It's OK when you're young, because everybody understands when you're young. But you've got to grow up one day. If you can't grow up then you've got problems.

"It's a hipness thing. People say *Oh, I can't go and see Quo anymore, now they've done that song*. OK, but what about all the ones that you do like? *Oh, no I don't like them anymore."*

That's what I've been getting at.

"Well," he says, "somewhere down the line someone's porky-pieing. I know what people are like. I've done it meself. I was driving down the road - I'm going to give the year away with the song! Anyway, this song came on the radio, "Yellow River", and I thought *Yeah*. I remember them being on *Top Of The Pops* and thinking *Oh no, I don't like that!* It was something like the wrong haircut."

But surely your recent singles being medleys of the dodgier variety hasn't helped your cause when it comes to that sort of thing. It opens you up to criticism that you can't pen a decent song anymore?!

"Well obviously people don't listen to our records then," he declares. "We had that for years with people going on about all our singles being the same thing over and over again. I used to think it was unfair, but then "Paper Plane" was the first single from "Piledriver" and it went. Then along comes "Hello" and someone says *I think "Caroline" will be the one.* Of course, because "Paper Plane" did it. But if you listen to "Hello", the material's quite diverse. As soon as we did a song like "Living On An Island" people are like *Why have you changed your style?* I'm like *Why are you bothering to ask me a question like that?* If we don't change they ask why we didn't, if we do it's not enough."

Is it not your fault for allowing those singles to go in the first place, then?

"No, because we wanted success," he retorts. "That's why I don't understand people who claim they don't want sucess. It's silly. Stay at home and play in your front room."

Status Quo have had their fair share of success, and whilst some/many (delete, etc...) may wish they'd now stay in their front room and play, out they are again. A perennial touring institution, even if Rossi doesn't like the word.

And no doubt back to haunt you year after year, again and again. But will *you* be there? ☘

Status Quo's "Live Alive Quo" is currently available through Polydor and the band are touring the UK.

Take the Cure!

After seven years and five albums with Anthrax, Joey Belladonna is now out on his own with a band called... BELLADONNA. MIKE MERCURY tracks down the singer

JOEY BELLADONNA

Pic Marc Paschke

It was always whispered (not necessarily quietly) that Anthrax vocalist Joey Belladonna was really a Journey fan. He was alleged to have no interest in the extreme metal style of music that the New York band helped to pioneer during the '80s, in the process establishing themselves as a premier cru vintage for an era that demanded its metal to be ever more deconstructive and challenging. Imagine that. Whilst Anthrax were tearing down the barriers, experimenting with rap and riffs, their singer was all the while gently gliding off in a dreamtime of Steve Perry nuances and Jonathan Cain keyboard textures. Rather like finding out that Charles Manson is a fan of *Baywatch!*

Thus, when early this year the band announced a new recording deal with Elektra and, in the process, rid themselves of Belladonna, it came perhaps as no real surprise. Inevitable really. Anthrax recruited former Armored Saint rusher John Bush - a more kindred spirit - and are now busying themselves with the first release of a new era (see the news pages this issue for further info on this project). And Belladonna is also working on material for a record - his first with new troopers Belladonna. And he seems extremely pleased with progress so far.

"I'm working at Goodnight Dallas Studios in Dallas, which is owned by Keith Olsen (famed producer). In fact, I'm co-producing the project with Keith's partner Gordon Perry. The music, contrary to rumour, will *not* be in the Journey vein. Rather it is quite heavy. I suppose you could describe it as UFO-style straightforward melodic hard rock. What I aim to do is keep old Anthrax fans with me, and pick up new ones as well."

At the time of this brief update, Belladonna (the band) had 14 songs in the bag, from which they will choose the final selection for the album, which should see the light of day on an as-yet unspecified label during February. As yet untitled, among those songs set for inclusion are "The Wanted", "Lost Child", "Cesspit", "Deadly Nightshade" and the pointedly titled "Greed And Ego". However, this last-named isn't necessarily aimed at Belladonna's former Anthrax team mates!

"Well, there are one or two references to my times with Anthrax in the lyrics on the album, but "Greed And Ego" itself isn't about them, ha! How do I get on with them now? I haven't spoken to anyone from the band since I was fired shortly after the Grammy Awards in Los Angeles. What happened was that after that ceremony, I got the feeling that things were rather cold between me and the rest of the band. In the end, Johnny Z (long-time Anthrax manager, and the man who acclaimed Belladonna on his recruitment as the guy who would transform the concept of a singer in a thrash metal band!) called to say that the band wanted to get rid of me.

"After seven successful years with the band , I reckon I had a good feel for Anthrax and what made the situation work. But I harbour no grudges against them and wish them every success. The fact that I haven't spoken to any of them since my departure is nothing new - I hardly spoke the guys when I was *in* the band!"

Elektra did have an option to sign Belladonna as a solo artist, but they chose no to exercise it, thus leaving the singer free to go his own way. And over the past few months, there have certainly been numerous rumours circulating, connecting him with the vacant position in The Scream (following John Corabi's departure to join Mötley Crüe), as well as linking him with the new band being put together by former David Lee Roth guitarist Joe Holmes. All of these, according to Belladonna, are founded on insubstantial evidence.

"It seemed that I was being connected at one time with almost everyone in Los Angeles! Sure, I met up with Joe Holmes, but we never played together. And I hung out with The Scream, but they would definitely have been the wrong band for me to join."

Instead, Belladonna began writing with veteran bassist John McCoy (ex-Gillan/Mammoth and a whole host of other worthies). And much of the material they penned will end up on the forthcoming album, although McCoy himself isn't involved. Instead, Joey is working with guitarist Paul Crook (he replaced original choice Al Romano. Crook is also handling the bass lines for the recording sessions; a bassist, who can also sing, will be recruited later for touring purposes) and drummer Dave Femmia, most recently with New York band Barfly, also featuring ex-Grim Reaper guitarist Nick Bowcott.

"I've known both Paul and Dave for a long time. In fact, there is an Anthrax connection with both of them. Paul was once Dan Spitz's guitar technician and Dave worked as Charlie Benante's drum roadie! I think they know every single Anthrax song, right down to the last note!"

This might well prove useful when Belladonna tour soon, with the singer determined to perform material from his previous band, including some songs never previously taken onto a stage! And rest assured that Joey Belladonna intends to take this band to all parts of the globe, following in the Anthrax tradition of performing anywhere, any time, any place.

There is little doubt that Joey Belladonna is a happier and more relaxed individual now than was the case in the later stages of his involvement with Anthrax. His sacking from that band has probably been good for both parties.

"I am really enjoying myself on this record. We are making good music and having fun at the same time. And let me also add this: Belladonna is a *band* not a *solo project*. It bears my name, but I'm not playing just with hired hands."

And with that, Joey returns to spin his worn-out copy of "Escape" - only kidding! ☘

Faith or Fear?

As BON JOVI's fifth album, "Keep The Faith", racks up huge sales, MALCOLM DOME talks to mainman Jon Bon Jovi about the joys and pain in the spotlight

I like Jon Bon Jovi. A crass statement? Maybe. An abdication of my responsibilities as an objective journalist? Certainly not. For, whilst I will defend my right to subjective inclinations, nonetheless I still believe I am able to maintain a balanced viewpoint on the man and his works. But... Hell, I still like the man.

Over the past decade (give or take a fleeting grace) I have watched him grow, mature, develop as a person, an individual and as an artist. From his first faltering steps in 1984 with the "Bon Jovi" album. Back then, I recall dismissing him as a pretty face carrying party tunes which would be forgotten in the instant it takes to flip a coin and bat into the next breezy trend. Not even the charms of the song "Runaway" convinced me that vocalist Jon, guitarist Richie Sambora, keyboardist David Bryan (back then known as David Rushbaum), bassist Alec John Such and drummer Tico Torres had any real future. But the New Jersey band had other ideas.

Coming to the UK in '84 to support Kiss helped cement the cult following Bon Jovi had built up through their debut effort with fans of melodic hard rock. A year later, I was converted via the grossly underrated "7800 Degrees Fahrenheit", a sophisticated record that displayed enough depth and emotion to completely win me over to their way of thinking. I was hooked, in particular, by the driving empty angst of "The Hardest Part Is The Night". Here indeed was a band with more to offer than a pout and a pose. A triumphant role of the dice at Donington in '85 (third on the bill to ZZ Top and Marillion), plus their own headlining shows in Britain established Bon Jovi as bon viveurs of the rock scene. They had their fan base. It was secured and tethered. Now they went in search of greater acceptance.

In 1986 we got "Slippery When Wet". We got hit singles like "You Give Love A Bad Name" and "Livin' On A Prayer". Suddenly, Bon Jovi were everywhere. Immediately, Jon's personable looks made him an idol. Magazines the world over demanded his time and attention. Bon Jovi were arguably the biggest rock band in the world - at least for a short while. They had also managed the highly complicated manoeuvre of retaining their old fans whilst appealing to a younger, more transient audience. Their roots were intact. And the strange thing is that Jon himself was uncomfortable as a pin-up. He had the status accorded by huge commercial success, but he wanted stature, respect as a performer, not as a performing seal. He sounded ill at ease during interviews with journalists who only wanted to know about his favourite colour and where he gets his hair cut. And, ironically, whilst many saw "Slippery..." as a *pure pop phenomenon*, in reality it was an excellent *rock* record, full of flair and intelligence. Don't let the superficiality of the rhythms fool you - this remains a magnificent example of brain power coupled to strategic thrust.

It's strange to recall that Bon Jovi began their "Slippery..." tour *supporting* 38 Special in the States. Just what the good ole Southern boys made of their opening act taking all the plaudits one can only imagine. Rather akin to Def Leppard three years previously supporting Billy Squier in the US as "Pyromania" set the country aflame! Determined to make the most of their rocketing fame, Bon Jovi ended up staying out on the road until well into the Autumn of '87, in the process headlining Castle Donington, as well as setting new house records wherever they played. However, I recall talking briefly to Jon at Donington and he looked jaded, tired, in desperate need of a rest. His eyes didn't have the joyous sparkle of the previous year. Not only the tormenting touring schedule, but also the constant media demands on his time seemed finally to have taken their ominous toll.

Yet, within less than a year the "New Jersey" album was out in the shops and the band were out on another massive world tour. With hindsight Jon admits this might have been a mistake.

"We didn't have enough time between "Slippery When Wet" and "New Jersey". To do what we did was suicide, but the powers-that-be had us straight back out. At the time I thought it was great. I remember being in Dublin for the start of the tour in '88 and someone said to me *What are you doing here so soon?* I replied *This is rock'n'roll, this is what it's all about. I love the road.* I meant it at the time. Only now can I appreciate that I was running, chasing my own ass."

Jon sounds now as if he has learnt a valuable lesson about life - sometimes it's the space you make for yourself that is as important as how you occupy your time. In the time I've known him, Jon Bon Jovi has always been a workaholic. If he wasn't immersed in Bon Jovi, then he was pursuing solo projects, starting a record label (Jambco), co-writing songs for, and also producing, other artists. He seemed to live at a pace that was almost sacreligious. I don't for a moment believe that his efforts and energies have been spiked by maturity, it's just that he's learnt how to focus. A valuable lesson some of us are still trying to appreciate!

Back in the mists of recent history, the "New Jersey" album and tour was followed by solo records from Jon (the '89 soundtrack for *Young Guns II*) and Richie (1990's "Stranger In This Town"), with David also getting involved in soundtrack work for the film *Netherworld*. Bon Jovi were on vacation. After such intensity of pressure, they needed a break from one another, inevitably leading to speculation that the band were over, finito. Rifts were reported, most of them invented by a media only too anxious to see controversy where a harmony - albeit strained at times - existed. There was also the public slanging match between Jon and Sebastian Bach of Skid Row, a band with whom the singer had close ties. Once again, it seemed unsightly and undignified, yet was blown up out of all proportion by people anxious to ridicule and villify Jon Bon Jovi. Claims and counter-claims about punch-ups and business malpractise seem thankfully to have died away, with relations at least between old friends Jon Bon Jovi and Skid Row guitarist Dave 'Snake' Sabo now back on an even keel.

"How did Skid Row do at Donington? I heard they went down well. I hope so. They're a great band. The whole problem between me and them was unfortunate, but it comes with the turf, doesn't it? I've spoken to 'Snakey' a few times recently and he seems in good spirits."

Maybe others will pursue this line of enquiry with Jon, but I see no point. Public brawls between personalities serve no purpose. Opening old wounds counts for nought in my book.

Beyond the whole situation with Skid Row, Jon has also had to go through the painful task of changing management. Doc McGhee had been with Jon and the boys every step of the way as they clambered the ladder. He laughed with them, cried with them. He grew with them. He lived the cause as much as the band. So, when the time

BON JOVI (L-R): DAVID BRYAN, TICO TORRES, ALEC JOHN SUCH, JON BON JOVI and RICHIE SAMBORA

JON BON JOVI

Pic Michael Johansson/Repfoto

came last year for a parting of the ways, it must have been hard on all parties concerned.

"Yeah, Doc was there from the beginning and he was also a friend. But his interests have diversified; eventually the fact that he has got into other business whilst my seven days a week, 24 hours a day attitude finally caught up with him. In all honesty, apart from a very brief moment in January of this year, I haven't seen Doc in a year, but if he were here right now, then I'd certainly have a cup of coffee with him and shoot the shit.

"After leaving Doc, I made a short-list of six managers whom I wanted to talk to about looking after the band. In the end I spoke to 26 managers. I would speak to anyone if I thought they had something to offer. But I couldn't find anyone who suited us."

The problem is an obvious one. Bon Jovi had been the priority in Doc McGhee's professional life. He had grown with them. There was a special relationship betwen them. It didn't matter how many successful bands McGhee had on his books, Bon Jovi would always mean more to him than anyone else. It's psychology. It's why billionaires so often frame the first dollar bill they ever earnt; there is something special that can never be matched. And what McGhee gave Bon Jovi was absolute attention. They were always his main concern. Thus, when Jon saw his manager threatening his band's position by his other business interests, he would inevitably feel a little betrayed and sever connections. Equally as obvious is the fact that Jon could never hope to find another manager of stature who would be prepared to devote the time and attentions to Bon Jovi that the singer demanded. Hence he himself set up BJM - Bon Jovi Management.

"The company only looks after Bon Jovi. That's what it's there for. And if any member of the band wants help on outside projects, then of course all the facilities would be at his disposal."

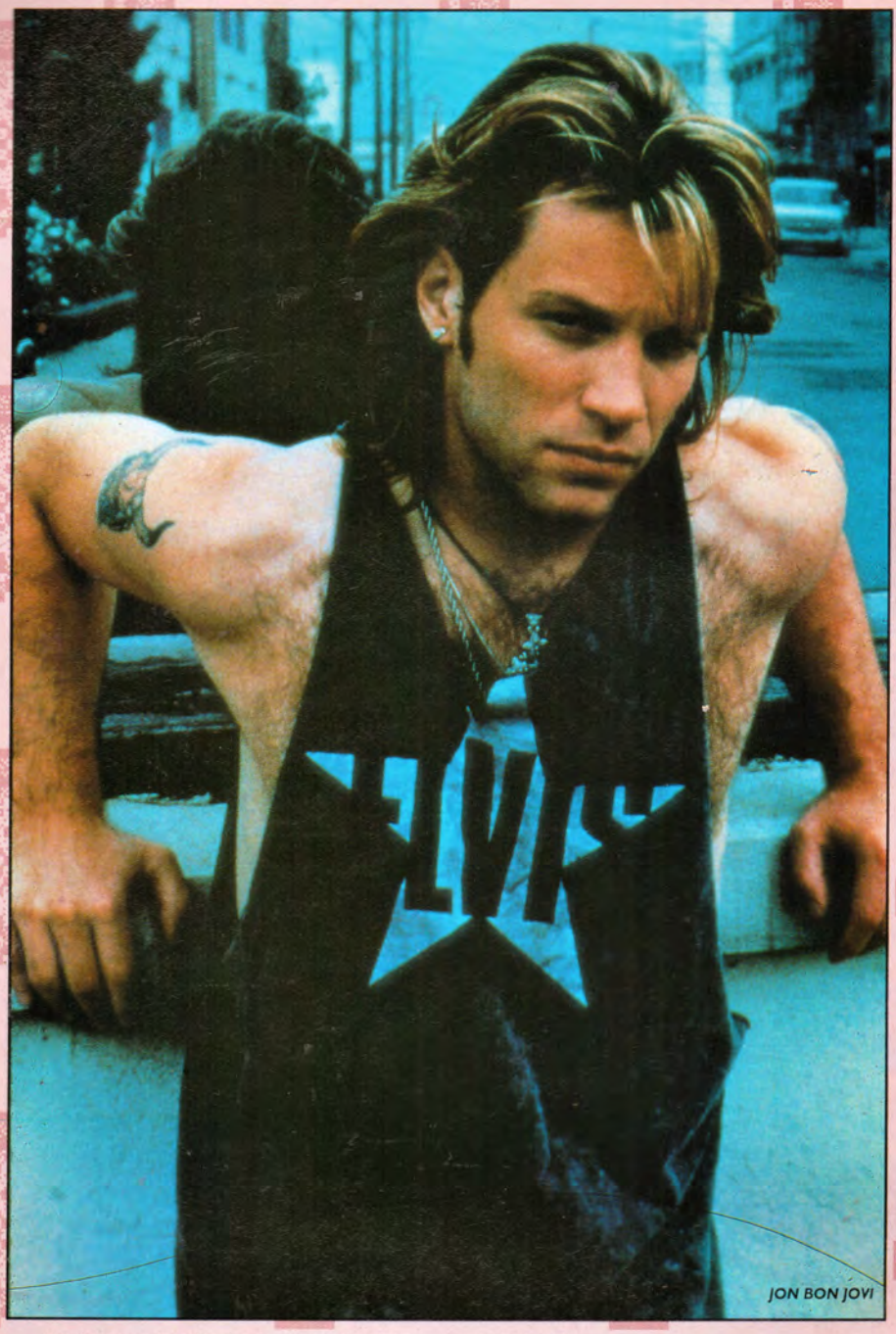
Thus, the scene was set fair for the return of 'The Five'. With Bon Jovi now in control of their own destiny (signed to the Jambco label through PolyGram and managed by BJM), last October the musicians came together for the first time in many months to discuss the way forward.

"We had a meeting and I said *We are going away for a week to talk over plans for the future.* I told my family that if I was home before Saturday then it wasn't good. We went out to an island in the Carribean called St. Thomas. We all stayed together in one house - no wives, no girlfriends, no managers, no agents. Just the five of us. There was only one road leading to the airport, so if anyone left they could be seen! I had a bunch of songs written and we discussed ideas and hung out together. I wanted to see if we were all thinking on the same wavelength."

Exactly what would have occurred if any of the band had been diametrically opposed to Jon's notions and ideas one can only guess. But being apart from each other seemed to benefit Bon Jovi as an entity. Jon, Richie and David's solo projects saw them develop and explore areas of their talents perhaps hitherto compromised and repressed by the requirements of the band. Tico, meantime, didn't touch a drum kit for an entire year, whilst Alec spent much of the 'vacation' recovering from an injury.

But what Bon Jovi look to have gained from their time apart from each other was the maturity to explore new facets of each other's talents. All too often musicians come back together after an enforced break from one another and immediately lock back into old thought patterns, ancient pessimism and deceits. I didn't have to hear any of the current "Keep The Faith" album to know that this wasn't case with Bon Jovi. I have too much respect for their qualities as people and musicians to believe that the driving force of the dollar would offset all other considerations. I wouldn't say this about many bands, but I just *felt* a landmark album in the offing. And the reality, I believe, has justified my...Er...Faith! What Bon Jovi have given to the world isn't be a throwback to previous achievements, but a record for '92. And all of my instincts tell me that when he underlines this commitment, Jon isn't casting a line for the sake of publicity:

"This is a Bon Jovi record for the '90s. You know, I can never repeat old formulae. There is no point in going backwards, that's just bullshit. And we also cannot just follow the current trend, because there's no satisfaction in that either. Look, when we started out, Boy George was a major star. But look where he is now! Since then, so many fashions have come and gone. If we'd latched onto every single trend that's happened, we'd be a musical mess by now. We have to believe in what we do. There's no point in doing a Garth Bon Jovi record (an allusion to top-selling mainstream country star Garth Brooks) or moving to Seattle. What's the use? All I know is that I'm happy with the record we've put out, and that's what matters most to me, because I made this record for myself."



JON BON JOVI

Bon Jovi started working last January on the album, writing and recording (the latter with Bob Rock acting as co-producer alongside JBJ). It's been a lengthy process, one that the band themselves have been prepared to tolerate in the pursuit of excellence, even if it does go a little against the grain.

"We actually began the writing process as a band in January, mainly because Richie had commitments through his solo album - touring, doing videos and promotional work. He had a lot going on. And we spent six months recording the album - we've *never* taken six months to do a fucking album! But it's the way that Bob Rock has become in the last four years. He's a superhuman producer.

"I believe the break from each other did us all some good. David, because of what he has done, could bring a lot more to this project than before. Richie experienced what it was like to do things on his own and be responsible for everything. And I learnt to take a step back and see things from a different angle, to take stock of what has happened to us. What exactly Richie learnt from making his own record you'll have to ask him, but I bet he liked the idea that when he was back doing a Bon Jovi record he was able to go out again! He could go and play for a couple of hours with some friends in a blues band at a bar. He can do that - god bless him. I can't. I felt that I had to stay and oversee every overdub and mix. It's the way that I am."

What Jon has done is to learn how to pace himself better. His diversification into various areas of endeavour have been cut right out. The Jambco label continues, but aside from Bon Jovi only Billy Falcon is now signed - and that's the way Jon likes it.

"Aldo Nova isn't doing another record for Jambco, and unless something comes along that really excites, then we won't be signing anything else. We're not sitting around, waiting for things to happen. We don't need anything else on the label to pay people's salaries.

"Bon Jovi is my priority and is the only thing that interests me right now. I stopped doing outside projects last March after working with Aldo Nova, Billy Falcon, Hall & Oates, Stevie Nicks and doing the *Young Guns II* soundtrack. The only thing I've been offered since came from Southside Johnny, who is one of my heroes. I did 12 shows with him as his rhythm guitarist travelling around in a van, and it was great. We sat in the back of the van and talked about his future and what could make him happen again. I told him to do various things, such as get Steve (Van Zant) and Bruce (Springsteen) involved. Anyway, he did everything, and asked me to come down and help out on his record. But I was so burnt out and tired that I had to turn it down."

No, for the time being anyway, it's his own band that has Jon's complete attention. And "Keep The Faith" may well be the dawn of a new era for the band, one born out of experience and natural chemistry.

"A lot of what is going on lyrically this time is in the first person narrative. It's not me hiding behind fictional characters, as has been the case in the past. I'm disclosing more about myself than ever before. For instance one song, "Bed Of Roses", I wrote in a hotel room last Summer when the uncertainty of the band and all the changes being made meant that I wasn't in a happy frame of mind. But don't get the wrong idea, in general the album is positive and upbeat."

All part of that growing process, achieving a balance between entertainment and personal reality. The process of becoming an artist. Beyond the album, Bon Jovi tour the UK in May and intend to stay on the road well into '94. And this time the tour won't just take in stadia and arenas, oh no...

"We did five or six small shows on a recent promotional visit to Europe (including London's Astoria Theatre). It was the only reason we agreed to come over. And we enjoyed that experience so much, just getting up there on stage, having fun. We're carrying on that idea when we start touring properly. Last time out, we did unannounced bar dates every so often. This time we will be making them public! I don't care if I play Wembley Stadium or a small club - I enjoy performing. Getting out there is what matters. You know, I would gladly do all this for free as long as I could carry on making records and playing onstage."

Already the Bon Jovi schedule looks to have been mapped out for the next two years. Don't be surprised if they show up in your local pub, plug in and groove out. Yet, it must be said that Bon Jovi's position in the rock world is an intriguing one at the present time. They have survived the onslaught of teeny fame intact. They are on the verge of becoming elder statesmen. Yet, the desire and restlessness to make continually challenging music ensures that Jon, at least, is constantly striving towards the uttainable. One has the feeling he will never be satisfied.

"You know, in spirit the Stones have influenced me. We had a giant screen erected in the studio and constantly played their movies. And, fuck they wrote some great songs, survived anything. I went to see them on their last tour in '89 with a chip on my shoulder. You see, I'd seen them in '81 and they were great. But in '89? Hey, I could sell out the stadium they played in! But I left the show in awe, as a little kid. They were just amazing. Bon Jovi can never be what they are. Just to carry their luggage would be a privilege.

"The sad thing about today is that there's no myth left, there's no magic anymore. There is so much media coverage of every little thing that nothing is left to the imagination. The excitement has gone in that respect. I recall just lying on my bed with the "Sticky Fingers" or "Born To Run" album covers and that was part of the cool associated with the Stones or Springsteen. That doesn't exist any longer. I feel it's sad. We cannot produce stars of that magnitude nowadays. It's gone forever.

"There's an old joke that if you can't sing, you can't write songs and you can't play an instrument then somebody can make you a star. But now, you don't even have to look any good. There are camera lenses that can do anything! And you know what I'm listening to at the moment? Well, it's not Seattle music. All I want to do is get hold of a copy of the soundtrack to *Honeymoon In Vegas*, which has people like John Mellencamp and Bono of U2 doing covers of Elvis numbers (it's available through Epic, fact fiends)."

Maybe that's why I like Jon Bon Jovi so much. He's honest - with himself and with others. There is no pretence. He is a proud man who seems genuinely more excited that his wife Dorothea has just come fourth in the US national karate championships ("she's a green belt, which is halfway to a black belt") than in the prospect of being acclaimed again as a 'superstar' in a welter of hyperbole. Through all this upcoming media blitz stands the real Jon Bon Jovi - a musician doing his best to express his talents by remaining true to himself. We can ask no more of ourselves or of anyone else. Can you say the same of yourself? ☘

"Keep The Faith" is available through Jambco/Mercury.

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DIE CHEERLEADERS

DIE KRUPPS (Clockwise, from bottom): JÜRGEN ENGLER, RUDIGER ESCH, BJORN LUCKER and RALPH DORPER

German band DIE KRUPPS are currently pioneering a unique blend of thrash and electronics. As they release a covers EP titled "A Tribute To Metallica", MALCOLM DOME talks to mainman Jurgen Engler

What is your concept of *heaviness?* Does it mean thrashing guitars and shrieking vocals? To many, it means simply *loud music.* And certainly, it is based more on guitars than any other instrument. However, there is a movement out there determined to take the concept into hitherto uncharted realms. It is a mixture of machine and instrument that is a left-field offshoot of industrial music. It is metal machine music!

If this notion seems a little offbeat and weird, then check out an EP just put out titled "A Tribute To Metallica". Issued by the Our Choice label (distributed through Rough Trade), it is a five-track affair recorded by German band Die Krupps and features covers of the Metallica songs "Enter Sandman", "Nothing Else Matters", "Battery", "Blackened" and "For Whom The Bell Tolls". But before we deal with this release, a few words about the band.

Die Krupps were formed at the beginning of the '80s, rising from the charred remains of German punksters Male. The band was formed by vocalist/keyboardsman/sampler/guitarist Jürgen Engler. Over the coming years, they issued albums such as "Stahlwerksinfonie", "Wahre Arbeit", "Waher Lohn" (both 1981), "Volle Kraft Voraus" (1982), "Entering The Arena" (1985), "Machineries Of Joy" (1989) and a new version of "Wahre Arbeit..." (cut in collaboration with Nitzer Ebb the same year).

Add in a compilation titled "91-82: Past Forward" (available through Mute) and this year's "One" (featuring a version of the Metallica song) plus an EP titled "Metal Machine Music" (again released this year and featuring guest appearances from German thrashers The Accused) and there you have: the complete Die Krupps canon. Until the evolution of "A Tribute...".

Joining Engler on the new release are long-time companion (on and off) Ralf Dorper (also associated with Propaganda), bassist Rudiger Esch and drummer Bjorn Lucker. And there is little doubt that Die Krupps have taken the Metallica songs and given them a fresh, extra dimension. If your concept of *heaviness* cannot stomach the use of machineries then Die Krupps are not for you. However...

"I love the way that music is opening up in the '90s. It is now all about bringing things together, now closing down avenues as was once the case. I know a number of thrash and speed metal bands who are very interested in what we are doing. I believe that the Exodus guitarists (Rick Hunolt and Gary Holt) liked our recent EP "Metal Machine Music".

"I've had a number of German thrash acts contact me about working with them. Deathrow wanted to record an EP at my studio."

The love affair between Engler and Metallica started way back when Die Krupps first sprung to life, as the man himself explains:

"I heard Metallica for the first time when they first put out records, and they were one of the bands who influenced me at the time. Not the only one, but I loved them right from the off. And as soon as I heard that "Metallica" album I just fell in love with the songs. I wanted to do covers of some of the stuff as a tribute to the band. Initially, I had wanted to do three tracks, "Enter Sandman", "Nothing Else Matters" (a video for which exists) and "The Unforgiven". But then I thought that was taking things a little too far. However I *did* record a version of "The Unforgiven" and this will be released next year on a German label sampler to be called "Industrial Revolution". This will have bands like Killing Joke and Prong on it, as well as us."

There is little doubt that this EP adds a new dimension to Metallica's music. And it is something with which Lars Ulrich and his cohorts are delighted.

"I actually met Metallica when they played a sold-out show in Dortmund recently. It was strange. The people at Rough Trade really wanted me to meet Metallica, but the Phonogram people did not! Anyway, someone who works for Phonogram in Switzerland is a good friend of Lars'. She gave him a copy of the EP and he loved it. So, I got back from New York after doing the video for "Nothing Else Matters" to find a message on my answering machine from Rough Trade, telling me that Lars had personally invited me down to the show, because he wanted to meet me!

"Lars was really nice, as was guitarist Kirk Hammett, who also liked what we'd done. Lars told me that for him, our versions had opened up a new universe to Metallica's songs. A song like "Battery" was really thrashy, but with us he could hear the melody for the first time! He told me that he wants us to cover "To Live Is To Die" (from the "...And Justice For All" album), because he'd love to hear that on keyboards."

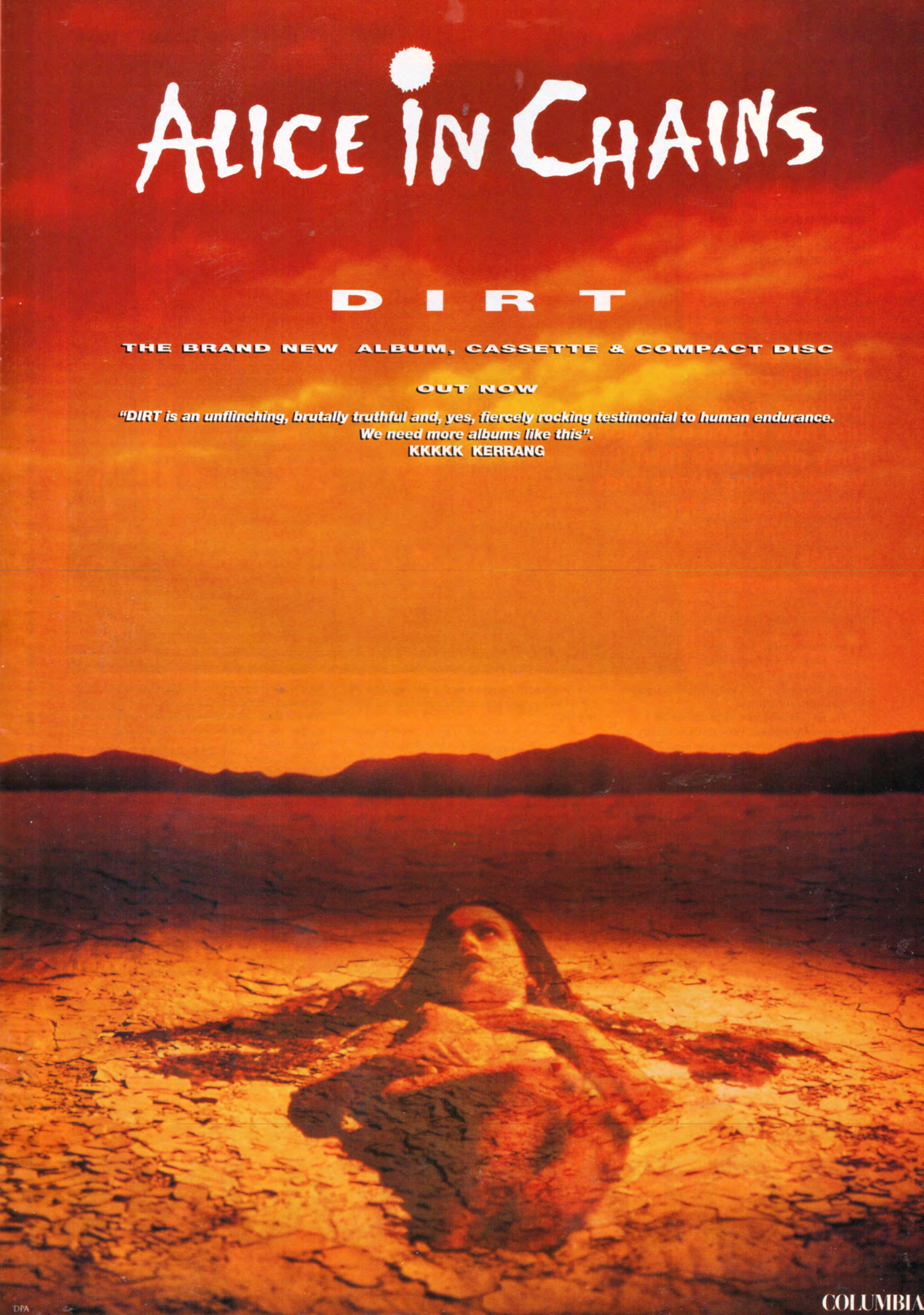
Now, Die Krupps are taking their connections with the thrash world a stage further, having recruited former Heathen guitarist Lee Alters (a man nearly associated with Megadeth when Jeff Young left).

"Again, it was really coincidental. A journalist friend of mine was in San Francisco not so long ago and he met up with Lee. Anyway, he was explaining how he wanted to put together a metal/techno crossover band like Die Krupps and how much of a fan he was of the "Metal Machine Music" EP..."

At that point, Engler was searching himself for a new guitarist to augment the band's sound. So, the pair ended up talking on the phone, Engler asking Alters if he would like to join the band, whilst Alters himself was asking if he could join! Thus, the band are now a quintet and preparing to take their blend of metal and machines into '93. A new record deal is being set up in the US (from whence will come a release over there for the "One" album within a couple of months), followed by a Stateside tour.

And, isn't it ironic that, to some extent, thrash metal has been given a shot in the arm by the very genre the early pioneers would probably have professed to loathing most of all?! But then, such are the diverse '90s! ☘

"A Tribute To Metallica" is available through Our Choice/Rough Trade.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COLUMBIA

North London on a balmy, late summer's evening. I've been persuaded to spend time with a handful of others at The Boston Arms in Tufnell Park. A friend (Emma) has been constantly badgering me about this band called Naked Truth. She knows the bassist. He's English. The other three are American. They're all black, but are sharing the bill on a four-week residency with various death and speed metal bands. Strange.

Anyway, to cut a long story short, they are magnificent. If you weren't there (chances are you weren't), then you missed something rather special.

NAKED TRUTH: (L-R): KWAME BOATEN, DOUG WATTS, BERNARD DAWSON and JIMMIE WESTLEY

They're black. Inspired by Cirith Ungol and John Coltrane. Formed in Atlanta and now based in England. They are NAKED TRUTH. Vocalist Doug Watts finds time to explain the confusion to MALCOLM DOME

Vocalist Doug Watts has a genuine inner growl that can compete with any death metal singer I can name. Guitarist Jimmie Westley is a virtuoso who plays within the context of the songs - the hallmark of a true master. Bassist Kwame Boaten and drummer Bernard Dawson are so tight I feel they're about to strangle themselves, the other two, the songs and the bar staff.

The self-same band were gonna tour the UK in December with Motörhead. When that tour was cancelled, they went out instead with Little Angels. Talk about *eclectic*.

"Our style allows us to play with all kinds of people," says the quietly spoken Watts. Yeah, well...

Watts is the metalhead in the band. Whilst Westley prefers jazz (hence the John Coltrane influx), the singer quickly found himself moving from his Motown roots (he was born in Detroit), and at a young age discovered Kiss and Black Sabbath lurking menacingly under the floorboards. So what did he do? Well, he sure as hell didn't go running for cover.

"I remember my mom wondered why on earth I was listening to Black Sabbath at the time. I guess I stood out from the crowd. I didn't get dates with many black girls."

It only got worse for Watts. Soon, he discovered oddball Los Angeles metal cult Cirith Ungol, another L.A. metal mob in Jag Panzer and Danish black metal heroes Mercyful Fate. There was no stopping him. And in 1982 he joined hardcore band Lastregus.

"It was about the time that Slayer were first coming out and nobody knew about them, so we stood out from the crowd as being far out."

The band, multi-racial, began as a five-piece, with Watts on guitar. His move to the microphone came when the band slimmed down to a trio, in the process recording two demos (Carcass are, apparently, among those who have heard and been impressed by these tapes), before splitting up at the end of '84.

"It was when I became a vocalist that I saw how difficult it was for people to accept me performing this kind of music."

Undaunted, Watts began to get into more groove-orientated stuff, jamming with his sister, "because I just wanted to play music". Now based in Atlanta, the singer began to make plans to put Lastregus back together. At the time, he also helped run a small club called The Pit, who hired out a room to bands for rehearsals. It was at this point that Watts met Westley. Naked Truth was already in existence, but lacked a direction and a focus. Watts was soon to provide that.

Moving briefly back to Detroit to "check out the hardcore scene", the singer eventually made what was to be a brief return visit to Atlanta.

"I told my mother that I would be back in a few days, but then I met Naked Truth's manager Bernie Rhodes and it was he who persuaded me to join. I then had to break the news to my mother."

But that wasn't the end of the journey for Naked Truth. At former Clash manager Rhodes' behest, they headed for England a couple of years ago, in the process picking up Kwame Boaten to complete the line-up, a recording deal with Sony subsidiary Sony Soho Square and a fresh challenge, to which they are proving more than equal.

Certainly, their two releases to date - the six-track mini album "Green With Rage" in November last year and the recent single "Read Between The Lines" - suggest this is a band who have a genuine love of fusing elements of hardcore, metal, funk and jazz into an ebullient ball of joy and spirit. And their forthcoming first full album (untitled, but due out in February) is certain to enhance their growing powers. Produced by Guy Sigsworth, it is impressive fare that boasts sufficient twists and turns to keep people on their toes, yet draws one in thanks to intelligent use of melodic poise.

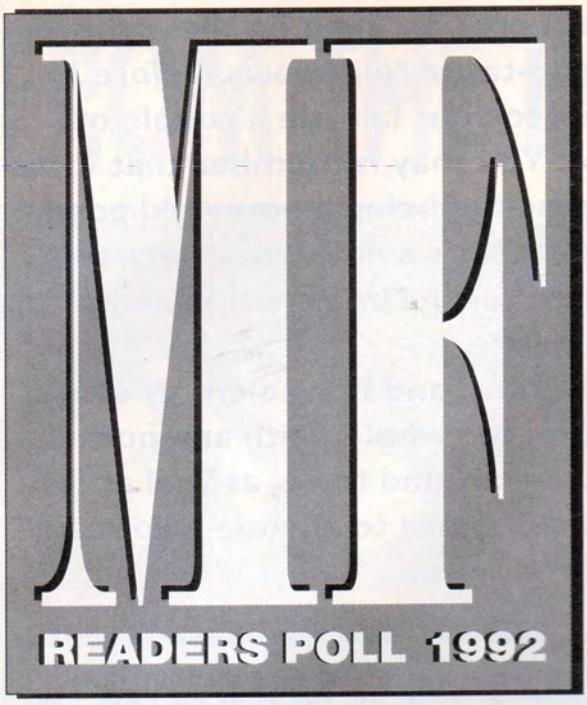
The question is: can the metal world accept an all-black band and, conversely, can the funk world accept a black band with unashamed metallic roots? In this age of musical enlightenment one hopes the answer is in the affirmative. And Watts is confident that Naked Truth can play a crucial role in providing further cross-pollination of race and style.

"I think Living Colour have played their part in breaking down the barriers, and The Black Rock Coalition (formed by LC guitarist Vernon Reid to help promote the cause of black rock musicians) has helped to open up people's minds, but no-one has yet followed Living Colour through, have they? We are a lot heavier than they are, and I believe that we will smash down the remaining prejudices."

And with a threat/promise that the band will soon be recording a version of an ultra-heavy classic they are determined to keep under wraps for the moment (thankfully *not* a Cirith Ungol song), Naked Truth prepare to enter 1993, a year that should see 'em become a major force. Who knows? Perhaps Watts can do for the long departed Ungol what Metallica did for Diamond Head. Mind you, I'm none too sure that the world is *that* ready for Naked Truth! ☘

Both "Green With Rage" and "Read Between The Lines" are both available through Sony Squared.

BODY COUNT



VOTE! VOTE! VOTE!

The 1992 MF Readers Poll

This may the first issue of MF, but it marks the end of a very eventful year for rock music. The Seattle scene has taken a grip on the nation. Thrash continues to defy the obituary notices. Mainstream rockers have made triumphant commercial returns. And the indie presence has been forceful indeed.

So, just who are the outstanding bands and individuals of '92? Have Pearl Jam made more of an impression than Metallica or EMF? Does anybody still remember Guns n' Roses? And how about Bon Jovi and Extreme? Well, here's your chance to tell us your opinion.

Just fill in the form below (or a photocopy of it) and send your entry to: ***MF Readers Poll, 40 Langham Street, London W1N 5RG***, to reach us not later than January 20.

Remember, it's your *decision!*

BEST BAND:

BEST MALE SINGER:

BEST FEMALE SINGER:.

BEST GUITARIST.:

BEST BASSIST:

BEST DRUMMER:

BEST KEYBOARD PLAYER:

BEST ALBUM:

BEST SINGLE/EP:

BEST COMMERCIALLY RELEASED VIDEO:

BEST PROMO VIDEO:

BEST LIVE BAND:

BEST LIVE GIG:

BEST NEW BAND:

WORST BAND:

BIGGEST JOKE IN ROCK:

BEST FILM:

BEST TV SHOW:

Mrs Mangel here, last seen on these shores on the soap-tastic *Neighbours*, before I emigrated to your fair isle a couple of years ago. You may remember that I was often accused of being a nosey old gossip, but surely there's a difference between passing on overheard *factual* information and plain idle *made-up* tittle-tattle.

Anyway, I'm here now, and I do solemnly swear to give you the truth, the whole truth and nothing but...The latest gossip around town, as well as giving out the occasional award to anyone who really pisses me off! So here goes...

■ There's nothing quite like kicking a good man when he's down, as **Stuart Pearce**, the Nottingham Forest and England captain found out recently. It seems that old 'Psycho', renowned for his crippling free-kicks and skilful defending, as well as being a closet punk rocker, was out with a couple of his Forest cohorts to see **Spear Of Destiny** at the Rock City in Nottingham. Upon entering said gig, though, Stu looked a trifle upset to be asked by one of the club's doormen if it was true that Forest were gonna wear numbers on the front of their shirts so it would look as if they were *attacking* instead of *defending* all the time!

Ouch - it's tough at the bottom! And it's not much better at the *top* either...

■ **Bon Jovi**, the band who have more rows than the Royal Family, were in London recently for a secret gig at The Astoria. Despite having taken off more than three years to get over their personal feuds and proclaiming to the world that they were once again *best buddies*, Jon Bon and Richie Sam were at each other's throats during the soundcheck of what was a warm-up show for their forthcoming world tour.

Although not quite coming to blows, they had a blazing slanging match, while the rest of the band looked on amazed at what was happening. William Hills are currently offering odds of 3-1 against Bon Jovi finishing the "Keep The Faith" tour with this current line-up!

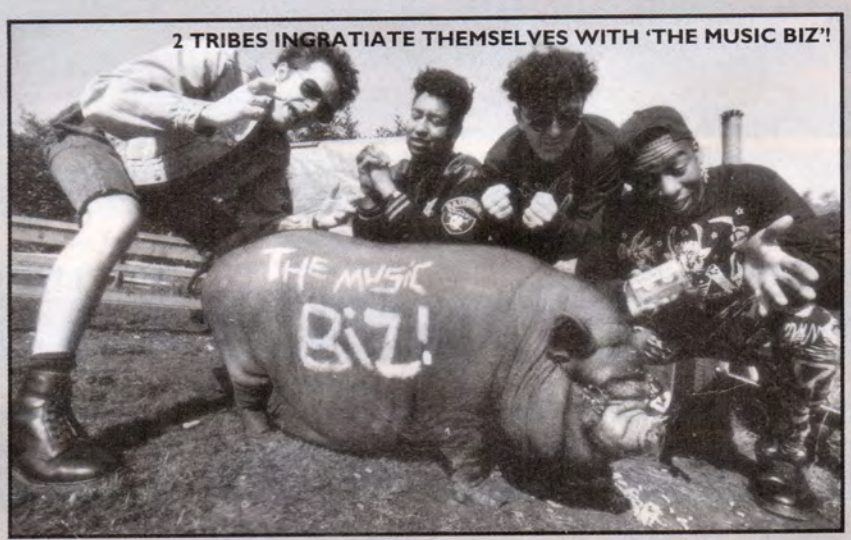
■ Shock! Horror! Surely it can't be true?! One of the tabloids has exclusively revealed that **Rolling Stones** six-stringer 'Keef' Richards dyes his hair to disguise his greyness. Like, *NO WAY!!!* Next thing you know, they'll be trying to tell us that **Poison** man Bret Michaels bleaches his hair to disguise his blackness!

■ **L7** vocalist/guitarist Donita Sparks got so pissed off at being told that she couldn't take part in the 'Rear Of The Year' competition on Channel 4's *The Word* recently that she decided to become the first unofficial entrant. She dropped her jeans as the band played live on the show (performing "Pretend We're Dead").

The Word apparently received a torrent of complaints, as Sparks finished the song half-naked!

More stories next month. See ya!

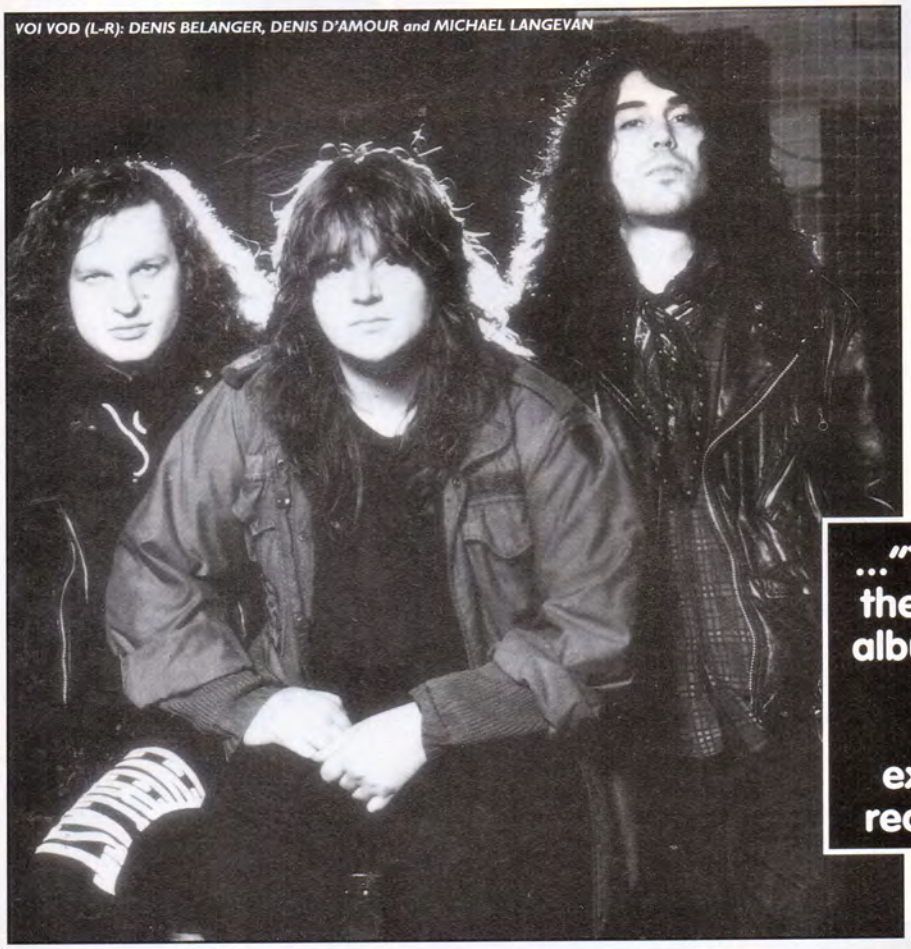
OUTRAGED COLUMN - WHINGER OF THE MONTH AWARD



One thing that really pisses me off is whingeing British rock bands who moan that they have had such a hard time of it in their quest for stardom. Well, they shouldn't be so crap then, should they? Take **2 Tribes**, for example. Their latest single, "File Under Rock", has a cover depicting the band offering a demo tape to a pig which has had *The Music Biz* painted across its side. Now, correct me if I'm wrong, but do I detect a chip on the shoulder here?!

A band with a record deal (Compulsion/Chrysalis) and a tour supporting **Extreme** under their belts - and they still can't sell any records?! Don't blame the music biz cos you've got shit for songs, lads! File under rock? File in the bin, more like!! Or, better still, give it a couple more weeks and file alongside **RPLA** in the *we used to have a record deal once as well* draw. And give my regards to **Kiss Of The Gypsy** while you're down there.

FROM THE INNER MIND TO...



VOI VOD (L-R): DENIS BELANGER, DENIS D'AMOUR and MICHAEL LANGEVAN

...."The Outer Limits". That's the title of the forthcoming album from Canadian band VOIVOD. Guitarist Denis 'Piggy' D'Amour talks exclusively about the new record to MALCOLM DOME

It's strange, but very few bands have during the course of their career managed to radically develop and alter their approach to music, in the process satisfying original fans, as well as picking up new disciples. Maybe that's because few bands have the self-confidence and belief in their own abilities to understand that the dilemma between artistic integrity and commercial pressure doesn't have to be weighted in favour of the latter. Maybe that's because there are too few rock musicians around who appreciate that there is something beyond the *I got into music to get my dick sucked and earn a fortune* philosophy so beloved of many. Maybe that's because all too few people *respect* what they are trying to achieve.

Such an accusation cannot be levelled at Canadian eclectics VoiVod, the Montreal band who have steadfastly refused to compromise or bow to the opinions of others during their decade-long clamber across a path strewn with the cadavers of broken faith, forever facing a sea of mirrors which distort their artistic dreams into financial nightmares. Born out of the thrash explosion back in '82, the band of Away (drums), Piggy (guitar), Blacky (bass) and Snake (vocals) fought hard from the beginning to stand apart. Their sound on albums such as "War And Pain", "RROOAARRGH", "Dimension Hatröss", "Killing Technology" and "Nothingface" was always diverse, challenging, owing as much to a certain perversity of eccentricity as to the likes of Venom, Slayer and Metallica.

Forever striding forward, VoiVod became darlings of the underground, their uniquely combative sound taking on psychedelic, industrial qualities as they matured and expanded. "Dimension..." back in '88 offered up industrial imagery long before Ministry made it all so fashionable. And 1991's "Angel Rat" saw them take a giant leap forward, in the process sharpening up the edges to the point of drawing blood, whilst also allowing for a maturation of sound and composition. It also marked the point at which Away became Michel Langevin, Piggy reverted to Denis D'Amour, Snake proposed himself as Denis Belanger and Blacky was content to be known as Jean-Yves Theriault. It was also the point at which Theriault left the band, having contributed much to "Angel Rat" and to the band's history.

Now, as 1993 dawns, VoiVod are unashamedly preparing once more to invoke the spirits with "The Outer Limits", the title of their seventh studio album and the first since signing direct to MCA, having spent the past couple of albums contracted to the Mechanic label.

"There are no guests on this album, just the four of us (bass lines being handled by Pierre St. John)," explains D'Amour. "It's our secret project in a way! We are recording in California (Los Angeles, to be precise; they've used MusicGrinder Studios to record and The Record Plant to mix), which means that we are close to the headquarters of MCA and the music industry in general. I must say that the company seem very excited by what we are doing."

The album is due out in early March, and according to the guitarist will see the band once again taking a slight bend in direction.

"Because we are recording under different conditions, obviously this album will be different to anything we've done before. I don't think it's similar really to "Angel Rat". In fact, if anything it's heavier and more powerfful than the last release. But you will still recognise it as a VoiVod album."

The album title is taken from the celebrated American SF TV series *That leads you from the inner mind to...The Outer Limits,* which was filmed between 1963-5, running for 49 episodes.

"We got inspiration from that show for this album and decided to use that as the title. We have even sampled things from the series."

Not precisely a concept album (as has been the case with so much of their catalogue), nonetheless there is a conceptual feel to one track - "Jack Luminous". It's a 17 minute epic, with a definite SF theme.

"The song was inspired by old Science Fiction movies. I'm not sure where the title itself comes from, you'd have to ask Michel as it was his idea. But the story concerns a guy from outer space who goes to a planet to warn them of coming evil..."

The population ignore his dire warnings, though. And when this negative force arrives, it seduces the inhabitants with hypnotic visions of beauty, transmitted through the medium of television. Too late, the people realise they have been duped! Perhaps there's a moral in that for all of us? Then again...

Elsewhere on the album are titles such as "Moonbeam Rider", "Fix My Heart" ("this is a rock'n'roll song as the title suggests, with a fast tempo"), "One Way Street", "The Last Machine" and "Le Pont Noir".

"That last song literally means "The Black Bridge", but that translation doesn't really give over the effect we are trying to portray, so we've kept the original French title. "Le Pont Noir" is about a bridge at the end of which is an evil force which proves irresistible to those who try to cross it. The further you get across the bridge, the weaker your resistance becomes, until it is too late to turn back."

And among the projected nine tracks for the album will be yet another cover version. Remember Pink Floyd's Astronomy Domine from "Nothingface"? Well this time around the band have gone back to the Floyd canon and brought out "The Nile Song" from the "More" album.

The LP has been produced by Mark Berry, someone whom D'Amour first met during the "Angel Rat" sessions.

"I met Mark at that time, because he was working on a different project in the same studio complex. He seemed to me to be a nice guy and someone whom it would be fun to work with. When Terry Brown (who produced "Angel Rat") wasn't available to do "The Outer Limits", we went shopping for producers and Mark's name was mentioned by our manager (Pierre Paradis)."

The band worked with Berry on two songs initially ("Moonbeam Rider" and "The Last Machine") to see if the liaison was compatible. He was.

As I said earlier, all the bass lines for this album have been handled by Pierre St. John, a fellow resident of Montreal, and the man who replaced Theriault on the band's last tour. However, he has yet to be confirmed as a fully fledged member of VoiVod. In the meantime, Theriault has, it would seem, lost all contact with his former VoiVod colleagues.

"He did the theme for a new ballet recently, but then he moved to Vancouver and none of us have heard from him since."

It looks from this distance that St. John will again tour with the band - and this time their plans include a first visit to Britain and Europe for six years. The last time they came over was in 1987, but fret not for the VoiVod plan is to begin their next tour over here.

"What we want to do this time around is start off in Europe. Our plan is to come over very soon after the album is released - sometime in March. It's been too long since our last visit." ☘

THE HARD

The last time guitarist Neal Schon played in the UK was four years ago. Now he's back with his new band HARDLINE. ANDY MARTIN reports from the frontline

What does it take to be a great guitarist? Great fingers, certainly, but great ears? Well, ex-Journey and Bad Engish axeman Neal Schon's got both assets and he's been putting both to good use with his latest band, Hardline.

As for the man's hearing, now that's pin sharp. As we chat over a cracking, echoing phone line from his home in San Francisco he picks out Free softly playing on MF's death deck in the backgorund.

"Hey, man," he exclaims. "That's Free. I've just did a couple of tracks with (former Free singer) Paul Rodgers for his blues album - it's called "Muddy Water Blues". Pink Floyd guitarist Dave Gilmour played on it, Jeff Beck played on it, Gary Moore played on it - it's going to be great record..."

Good ears and great fingers apart, it's connections that get you somewhere in this business and Schon's got 'em a'plenty.

Recording an album with vocalist Sammy Hagar - the H.S.A.S. project, also featuring bassist Kenny Aronson and drummer Michael Shrieve. They issued one album through Geffen - for starters lead to Hardline opening three shows for the Hagar-fronted Van Halen on their recent US tour - before Hardline even had an album out.

"We played the shows, but I didn't know what to expect because people weren't really aware of us, or any of our material, But we did great on the show," breezes the affable Schon.

Having followed those dates with a string of shows with Mr. Big (again there's a connection. Mr. Big are managed by the Nightmare organisation, who looked after Schon when he was with Journey), Hardline has since been out on the road alone and, in Schon's modest opinion, have been "kicking ass".

Yet Hardline (Schon, drummer Deen Castronova - previously with Schon in Bad English and before that in The Wild Dogs - plus ex-David Lee Roth bassist Todd Jensen, guitarist Joey Gioeli and vocalist Johnny Gioeli) still remain something of an unknown quantity in their native US, despite the kick-start of the Van Halen and Mr Big shows, as well as Schon's formidable reputation as a guitar player.

"We've had minimal success with the album," confesses Schon. "But it's starting to take off right about now - people are starting to find out about it."

Part of the reason for the slow build is, believes Schon, that melodic rock music is sufferiing fall out from what he calls, "this Seattle thing", compounded by the capricious nature of US radio.

"We just don't fit into that category at all," he says.

"I just think it (grunge metal) is flavour of the month at the moment. And things change. Radio out here in America is so fickle and changes so rapidly that you never know what's going to happen next. So rather than jumping on a bandwagon and saying *I think I want to play grunge metal,* we're going to stick to our guns and play what we want to play.

"And what's been happening is that when we do play, a lot of people have been showing up and saying that they love it and they wish there was more music like this - so it's only a matter of time before it catches on again."

Regardless of the fads across the Atlantic, British audiences have a proven appetite for crafted melodies and elegant guitar-driven songs - Hardline's stock-in-trade.

And Hardline, who are currently playing a string of UK dates as support band to Extreme, will undoubtedly prosper.

Schon last stepped onto a British stage for a brief cameo alongside Aussie belter Jimmy Barnes in 1988. But that time lapse holds no fears for him; the man is brimming with confidence.

"I think this band is going to do better than either Bad English (Schon's previous band) or Journey (the one with which he built his AOR reputation)," he asserts. "I think Hardline's more of an English-sounding band, with a late '60s feel. It's not quite as rough as, say, The Yardbirds - some of the stuff is more melodic and some of the stuff is a lot harder. We're somewhere inbetween. And that's kind of what Extreme are like.

D REPORT

But they're a bit more funky, like Mother's Finest. Yet I think both of our bands are going to be very compatible onstage.

"Nuno (Bettencourt)'s a really great kid. I first met him a few years ago when Extreme came out; he's a super nice guy and a fan of my playing and I'm fond of his guitar playing. He and I'll probably get together on this tour and write some stuff"

There you go, connections at work again, rock's old boy network in full flow.

That apart, playing some of this country's more sizeable halls also appeals to Schon.

"We're going to love that, because this band just goes nuts on a big stage."

Yet while Schon may keep some illustrious company - as is certainly the case on the aforementioned Rodgers' blues album - outside of his guitar playing peers, recognition of Schon's remarkable pank-spanking ability has, curiously, not been as wide as the man deserves. After all, Schon was playing alongside the legendary Carlos Santana while still a precocious teenager.

Hardline, he reckons, is about to change all that.

"When I'm playing live, people are going *Woa, I didn't know you could play like that.* Basically, I'm let out of the cage more and I'm doing a lot more wailing than I have been doing in the past. I've always been a band player - playing what's necessary for the band rather than what I wanted to. Hardline is closer to what I did with Sammy Hagar on the H.S.A.S. record. It's the first album that I've done that's built around guitar rather than keyboards, which was definitely the case with Journey and Bad English."

Part of that new-found freedom to express himself is due to the two unsung talents Schon linked up with while in Los Angeles , the Gioeli brothers - singer Johnny and guitarist Joey. Schon was producing the brothers when he decided to form a group with them instead.

"I was looking to be in a band that wasn't seen as a supergroup, for one," he explains. "I wanted it to be looked at as a new band and given a fresh chance, without everybody putting a label on it immediately.

"And I find it very refreshing to play with the players I'm with right now - their ideas are not jaded; there's a complete feel to what we can do. And nobody's afraid to try anything new - it's very experimental. I'm enjoying it a lot."

And that's plain as daylight to see on Hardline's sizzling debut, "Double Eclipse". From the pounding "Life's A Bitch" to the shredding "Rhythm From A Red Car", it's clear that Hardline's kick has Schon's firm toe in the boot. The man is clearly enjoying himself.

It's a few light years removed from Schon's day with AOR titans Journey, now the subject of a three CD/ cassette retrospective "Time 3", due to be released by Columbia on January 11 and already available in America, where the band enjoyed several platinum albums and a stature of arena level. There are some 55 tracks on the album, seven are previously unreleased, including two live cuts, plus outtakes from studio classics "Infinity", "Escape", "Frontiers" and "Raised On Radio". And there are also four tracks only previously available on soundtracks. In short, a monster among boxed sets and a fitting tribute to the San Franciscan band who went their separate ways in 1988 after a string of hits (an official split was never announced). This was a band who had (and still have) a major impact on the AOR genre. There is also a 64-page booklet included on the band who did so much to make AOR palatable throughout the '80s and cover artwork, specially commissioned from long-time Journey collaborator Stanley Mouse.

And while his sights are firmly fixed on Hardline, Schon does see some value in the Journey retrospective.

"There's some unreleased stuff on the record that's pretty cool. Obviously, if I was working with Journey I'd be happier with a brand new record rather than releasing a boxed set. In the United States we reached a hight of success whereby Journey are as worthy of having a boxed set out as much as anyone else. And there are going to be some die-hard fans over here in the UK twho are going to go nuts over it also."

Of course, there are constant rumours circulating about a Journey reformation, with vocalist Steve Perry's solo career seemingly on an hiatus (he has been starting ans stopping his second album for a few years now, even at one point dragging guitarist Michael Schenker into the fray) and keyboardsman Jonathan Cain not currently employed in the spotlight. And drummer Steve Smith has long been losing himself in jazz-rock. But for Schon the time is now and the band are Hardline, with all thoughts of a Journey reunion dismissed. And, it must be said, boxed sets aside, the Hardline according to Messrs. Schon & Co. is an enticing prospect indeed. ☘

"Double Eclipse" is available through MCA. Hardline are currently touring the UK with Extreme. See Tour News *for full details*

OPTIMUM WOUND PROFILE operate on the extreme edge of metal. As is shown by their recent debut album, "Lowest Common Dominator". MALCOLM DOME cuts deep with vocalist Phil Vane and guitarist Rocki

OPTIMUM WOUND PROFILE (L-R): PHIL VANE, SIMON FINTON, IAN BARNARD, RICKI and SNAPA

Sometimes I wonder if I'm exactly sane *(So do we! - Deputy Ed.)*. And then I stare closely at my inner turmoil - and I *know* that I'm not at all sane. And I give praise to some unencumbered beast somewhere within my psyche. The beast who continually keeps me searching for increasingly diabolic contentment. For, without such driven darkness I would certainly not have my love of all things extreme - music, movies, life. And I would undoubtedly find East Anglia's Optimum Wound Profile unpalatable, instead of a beautiful celebration of instability and deconstruction.

Listen to this band's debut album (on Roadrunner), "Lowest Common Dominator". It has disturbances of tonal terrorism. It has barricades of perverted monstrous metal reagents. This is an album of *music* with artistic merit, not merely a path to financial security.

OWP were formed in the late '80s by vocalist Phil Vane (also a member of Extreme Noise Terror) and guitarist Rocki (previously with Screaming Holocaust and Raw Noise).

"We used to live together in Ipswich and were both into the same sort of music," explains Vane. "We both listen to totally different stuff from others in the area, who are into punk or else pretty crap jingly, jangly horrible bands. We like fucked-up, weird shit, like the early Swans and Slab."

Recruiting bassist Ian Barnard, drummer Dom Cat (both of whom were already playing together in another band; Dom has since been replaced by a drum machine), second vocalist Simon Finbow ("He found us," laughs Vane) and ex-Deviated Insinct keyboardsman Snapa, Optimum Wound Profile set about creating a sound morbidly enveloping, morribundly defrocked. Two demo tapes later, they signed a deal with Roadrunner. And now they're out on the streets with one of the year's most autonomous releases.

What makes "LCD" such a marvel is its confident, dripping deathwatch and formidable pacing. In many respects it also has a visual identity, bringing to mind an orchard of chemical waste and mechanised detritus. Truly, folk music for the surreal. Yet, it is also ironic that this record appears at precisely the moment that Ministry have elevated the industrial genre to something approaching mass acceptance. So, OWP could well be seen by some as jumping on a bandwagon.

"We are worried about being seen as jumping on a bandwagon," admits Vane. "But I hope people realise that, although we have only just put out an album, nonetheless we have been together for a couple of years and have been into this type of music for years and years."

"The new Ministry album ("Psalm 69") is good, but their early stuff is a million times better," adds Rocki, putting a different perspective on proceedings. "To me, the ultimate Ministry album is "A Mind Is A Terrible Thing To Taste". But I don't want to be down on the band and start a slanging match. They're doing well for themselves, so good luck to 'em! However, there are lot of people who believe they're into industrial music now, because they like the new Ministry stuff, but it isn't industrial at all. To me, *real* industrial music is experimental, ambient stuff. You don't work with conventional instruments, but work with noise. And bands like White House, Throbbing Gristle were doing it years ago."

"This trend will pass in a couple of years and people will move onto the next thing," interjects Vane. "At the moment, there are many major labels looking to sign heavy bands in this style, but they'll all get dropped like shit once the fashion passes. It's like the whole punk thing. To the music business, it was a good bit of rebellion and sold a lot of records. You had people telling their parents to piss off for a couple of years, and then once the trend passed they'd crawl back home. Once punk lost its trendiness then you were left with the hardcore of fans who were really into the music."

"What the music business does to a large extent is to make rebellion safe," muses Rocki. "It does the parents' job for them. There are people around who think rebellion means owning a copy of "Never Mind The Bollocks" or the latest Nirvana album! Look at the industrial scene. If that sort of music becomes too accepted, then the bands become acceptable. They start mellowing out, becoming run-of-the-mill and tone down. But the underground industrial bands would never do that. There is a massive underground scene, with bands releasing records all the time on very small labels. There are so many bands in Germany, Sweden and Switzerland who are brilliant, but will never get heard over here, because they are on such small labels. And these bands *want* to stay underground, to retain that certain mystique."

For OWP the future lies in building on the progress made in the studio through touring (something they've never undertaken to a large extent before). However, they are already planning their second album.

"All the ideas are there, and some of the material is written," reveals Vane. "A lot of our new stuff is ambient, experimental music. I know it's all been done before, but we are trying to do things in our own way. Although there will be guitar-orientated songs on the next record, what we want to do is to get slightly away from the style on "Lowest Common Dominator". Some of those songs were around for so long before being recorded that they now seem like 'old hat' to us."

In a musical environment where imitation is seen as the cloak of convenience by many, it is refreshing to come across a band such as OWP who are proud to remain individual.

"There's no lack of talent in the UK. There are people who can play guitar brilliantly, but they are content to limit themselves to copying others instead of being individual," states Vane. "Hopefully, we are getting away from that. What we are doing might have been done before, but there's nobody else doing it. And it's surely got to be easier to get noticed by being different?!"

"A lot people see only the supposed glamour of touring, getting drunk every night," maintains Rocki. "They believe bands make enormous amounts of money. But it's not like that. You don't make a lot of money, and touring is bloody hard work. You work your arse off for next to nothing. Besides, this doesn't last forever, unless you are Nirvana and sell millions of records. A lot of young bands sweat their arses off for two years. They do gig after gig after gig and are ignored. They spend good money on demos that don't get noticed. Then they run out of money and have to give up. That's why so much talent goes to waste."

There's a lesson in there for all of us. If we want to protect and nurture *real* talent in this country, let's begin by *recognising* it. All too often we confuse accessibility with ability. OWP prove the lie to this myth. Now it's up to us to run with the ball. Have you got the stamina?! ☘

The album "Lowest Common Dominator" is issued through Roadrunner.

Penbangers

To have your Penbanger included in MF, send your letters to: Penbangers, MF Magazine, 40 Langham Street, London W1N 5RG

I'M a 20-year-old Indonesian guy who's into most thrash/death/grindcore bands. My favourites are: Napalm Death, Slayer, Death, Entombed, Anthrax, Metallica, Kreator, Necrodeath etc. I want penbangers from all over the world, male and especially female. Write to: Kris, GG Sidomulyo 11, Klaten 57414, Central Java, INDONESIA.

20-YEAR-OLD South African thrasher who seeks penpals from anywhere around the world. Don't let the fact that I'm from S.A. worry you, we thrash just as hard as anyone can. Favourites are death and thrash metal, Sepultura are godz. Females are more than welcome to write. Write to: Earl, No.4, Montanac, 418 The Hillside, Lynnwood, Pretoria, SOUTH AFRICA 0081.

AUDIO TRADER Most rock/metal/speed/thrash/death, live and demo tapes. I'm into allsorts of stuff so send your lists for possible trade. I'm always looking for more stuff for my collection. Ian Addicoat, 4 Toltuff Road, Alverton Estate, Penzance, Cornwall, TR18 4DY, ENGLAND.

CAN anybody tape me: Black Sabbath lives/bootlegs (early 70's only), Earth (B.Sabbath), Blue Cheer: Vincebus Eruptum, Hell: Save Us From Those Who Save Us, Deep Switch LP, Heavy Metal Heroes Pt.2, L.Crucifier LP, Shiva: Firedance LP, No Quarter FRS Session '83/LP, Trouble: Run To The Light LP, Living Death: Metal Revolution LP, Sabbat BBC Session. Indicate price when sending lists. Also smallish list to trade with 70's rock - grindcore/punk but won't trade/buy records/CD's. Send to: Richard, 21 The Scarplands, Duston, Northampton NN5 6EY, ENGLAND.

TAPE TRADERS WANTED! I am looking for tape traders from all over the world (esp. Canada, USA, UK). Live tapes, radio concerts, demos. I am into Kansas, Styx, Shooting Star, Toto, but also Rush, old AC/DC, AOR demos, Thin Lizzy. Your list gets mine. Richard Leskens, Ravelstraat 9, 3906 CM, Veenendaal, THE NETHERLANDS.

14-YEAR-OLD female into HM/thrash/death metal seeks male/female penpals worldwide aged 14+. I'm into Metallica, Megadeth, Faith No More, Obituary, Sepultura, Slayer, Skid Row and many more. All letters answered. Write to: Karen Moore, 20 Chatham Avenue, Hayes, Bromley, Kent, BR2 7QD, ENGLAND.

WANTED: Motley Crue and Treat. Looking for traders from all over the globe. Looking for anything on the above. Your list for mine. Over 500 demos, live recordings etc to choose from. If I don't have it, I can get it. I also trade posters, pin-ups etc. Penpals also welcome. Faves include: Extreme, Lillian Axe, Every Mother's Nightmare, The Scream, Kane Roberts, Slaughter and tonz more!! Send list and letters to: Judi Vincent, 18 Jordan Road, Billerica, MA 01821, USA.

RELIABLE live tape traders wanted! Italian tape trader very fast and reliable into Iron Maiden, Metallica, Mr. Big, Thunder etc., seeks more contacts from anywhere. Now I'm especially looking for Cacophony (Friedman/Becker) and Adrian Smith (A.S.a.p., Ran, The Untouchables) live tapes, but anyone with reasonably large list is welcome. Your list gets mine. Write to: Marco Gamba, Via Ascuncion II, 10134 Torino, ITALY.

20-YEAR-OLD Australian metalhead into everything from Nelson to Napalm Death, Sugarcubes to Slayer, 60's pop, classical, glam, AOR, thrash, death and grindcore, wants open-minded people with more than half a brain to write to: Dale Watts, 79 Bellambi Lane, Bellambi, NSW 2518, AUSTRALIA.

HEY YOU HM DUDES I'm a 20-year-old and wants to hear from anyone, age and looks not important. I like GNR, Metallica, Whitesnake, Def Leppard, Sepultura, L7, Nirvana, Bon Jovi, Queen, Magnum, Skid Row. Be glad to hear from you dudes. Write to: Jamie Windridge, 77 Hume St., Kidderminster, Worcs, West Midlands, DY11 6RB, ENGLAND.

BORED, lonely and very pissed off 23-year-old short-haired music fan, needs other musos to help beat the depression. I'm into all aspects of rock and metal, especially Metallica, AC/DC, Skid Row, Queen, FNM, Extreme, Megadeth, Nirvana, Slayer, Warrior Soul, Mordred etc. But I can also appreciate other forms of music, like blues, funk, hip hop, rap, techno etc. Girls and Girls with red hair especially welcome, but anyone into music especially Metallia freaks and collectors please write. Shaun, 20 Powerscroft Road, Hackney, London E5 OPU, ENGLAND.

METALLICA FANATIC Looking for everything and anything regarding Metallica, especially audio and video gigs, any tours, any country. I have a growing list and am willing to trade! Send lists to: Paul, 106 Astbury Avenue, Smethwick, Warley, West Midlands, B67 6JH. Your list gets mine!

PUNKHARDGRINDEATHRASHER, male, 18, into: Godflesh, Terrorizer, Napalm Death, Bolt Thrower, Grave, Nirvana, Misfits, Carcass, Morbid Angel, Repulsion etc., would like to be your penpals. All of you're welcome! All letters will be answered as soon as possible. Write to: Hainz, No. 401, Blk F4, Sec. 2.B.B, Wangsa Maju, 53300, Kuala Lumpur, WEST MALAYSIA.

TAPE TRADERS audio/video from all over the world wanted. I'm looking for anyting on Van Halen, Extreme, Mr.Big, Yngwie Malmsteen & Steve Vai. Have a large list to trade with. Write to: Drew, 46 Holm Park, Inverness, SCOTLAND IV2 4XU.

SKYCLAD tapes wanted. I am buying not trading, so if you've go anything, send details and prices to: Rob Allen, 7 Charles St., Rugby, Warwickshire, CV21 2EW. Good quality stuff only please.

ALL round metal fanatic into mostly everything about metal, like Ozzy, Kiss, Kings X, Venom, Black Sabbath, Van Halen, King Diamond, Yes, Manowar, TNT, Pantera and many others is calling out for help. I'm also a real Mentors freak and I know there's material in this world which I don't have yet, so that's why I'm calling out for all metal fans from all over this blue planet. Especially their records on Mystic records are wanted. If you have anything about them (articles, records, information), please contact me, if you do you'll have a friend for life... Write to: El Winston Arntz, Acaciastraat 50, 6523 DM, Nijmegen, HOLLAND.

FEMALE, 27, into WASP, Poison, Vain, Roadcrew, Bratpack, Vogues Rouges, Alice Cooper, Danger Danger, Bon Jovi, Dan Reed, Queensryche, Infectious/Suicidal, Faster Pussycat, Every New Dead Ghost, Steelheart, Kiss and the list goes on!! Would like to hear from any really long-haired monsters and beasts. Blackie Lawless lookalikes always welcome. Must be 6 foot or over. All letters answered, photo nice, but not necessary. In West London mainly, the South or the whole wide world. Jillyanne, 63 Nield Road, Hayes, Middlesex, UB3 1SG, ENGLAND.

WILD & CRAZY long blonde-haired male, 24. Fave bands include: Iron Maiden, AC/DC, Whitesnake, Black Crowes, Love/Hate, Wolfsbane, Skid Row, Spread Eagle, Ozzy, XYZ, Badlands, Electric Boys and WASP. I'm looking for raunchy long-haired females to write to, especially from America + Europe. Sense of humour essential. No thrashers or 14-year-old Guns N'Roses fans please! Photo insures reply. Write to: Steve, 6 Northwick Road, Monks Park, Bristol, BS7 OUG.

ANYONE out there into good metal? Hi, I'm Rob, I'm 20 and I would like to write to females/males aged 16-22. I am into the following: L7, Lunachicks, Phantom Blue, Vixen, Dio, Steve Vai, Iron Maiden, Manowar, Bathory (early), Venom, WASP, King Diamond, Mercyful Fate, Metallica + others. Anyone who have merchandise on any of these bands feel free to send a list (especially stuff on L7, Lunachicks, Dio & Vai). Write to: Rob, F.Z.O.C., 56 Madin Road, Tipton, W.Midlands, DY4 8JT, ENGLAND. P.S. Girls from U.S., France, Italy, Austria, Israel, Spain, Mexico & Hawaii are more than welcome!

ROCK FAN, 19-year-old male seeks female penbangers, any age/race. Photo appreciated. Likes all rock music, especially female bands, but as there aren't a lot, has to put up with Rush, GNR, Nirvana. Would like to hear from girls with a sense of humour, so you can teach me. So get penning babes. Write to: Maz, 25 Wellstone Drive, Leeds, L13 4DX, W.Yorkshire, ENGLAND.

FEMALE, 16, looking for some interesting males to write to. I'm into Cathedral, Carcass, Deicide, Paradise Lost, Entombed, Obituary, Cannibal Corpse, Napalm Death, C.O.C., Pestilence, Suffocation, Dismember, Goreguts, Immolation and many more. So get off your a... and write to: Claire, 18 Cathcart St., Ayr, Ayrshire, SCOTLAND. P.S. All letters answered, the weirder the better.

DEATH METAL is my reason to live. 21-year-old male seeks friends from all over the world, who likes bans like: Sepultura, Deicide, Paradise Lost, Obituary, Cancer, Messiah, Cannibal Corpse, Morgoth, Immolation, Unleashed. All letters answered. Shulekin Artem, 21 ap.64, Zipovskaja St., Krasnodar, 350072, RUSSIA.

FEMALE ROCKER into Queen, Metallica, FNM, Nirvana, GNR, Sacred Reich, Lita Ford, Cher, Skid Row, Aerosmith, Poison, AC/DC, Alice Cooper etc. Most hard/rock thrash. Seeking males or females 16+ for correspondence all letters (esp USA) from anywhere around the globe. Send pic please. Maria Mellon, 52 Farleigh Ave., Trowbridge, Wiltshire, BA14 9DT, ENGLAND.

LEATHER'N'LACE 25-year-old female, native to California, seeks penfriends from Europe, some of my fave bands are: Metallica, Pantera, Anthrax, Sound Garden, FNM, Motorhead, Iron Maiden, Black Sabbath etc. I'm a risk taker who enjoys travel outside the U.S., going to concerts, and would love to hear what is happening on your side of the world. So please write, fun, laughter, friends. Eud P., 2217 Otis Dr. #Q Alameda, CA, 94501, USA.

HEY YOU! Are you a sexy young rock vixen or a righteous bro? Do you fancy being my penpals? Of course you do! I am a 24-year-old male biker in the jail and I am very lonely and bored. I would love to hear from anyone, anywhere, especially the USA. I am a regular writer who won't stop after a few letters. So come on folks, cheer me up! Write to: Kev Bell 39/92, D2/24, HMP Shotts, Lanarkshire, SCOTLAND. P.S. Special hello to my good friend Tunay. Anyone who knows me, I maybe down but don't count me out!!!

DIO fans & records wanted! I'm a 20-year-old Ronnie James Dio fan and I'd like to get in contact with other Dio fans around the globe. I collect rare Dio records, so please also offer me all kind of rarities from Dio, especially vinyl bootlegs! Tapio Keihanen, Mesiheinankatu 2 B 6, 33340 Tampere, FINLAND.

I'M looking for interesting people to trade/correspond with. At the moment I'm listening to music like: Well Of Souls, Winter, Arcturos, Kong, Sevenchurch, Entombed, Chorus Of Ruin, Dead Can Dance, Ozric Tentacles, Confessor, Agonize, Paradise Lost, Candlemass etc. Dave, Flat One, 104 Llewelyn St., Pentre, Rhondda, Mid-Glam, S.WALES, CF41 7BU.

WHO will come to discover Los Angeles with me? Female, 20, seeks M/F, 20+ to go to L.A. with. And also penfriends from anywhere in the world. I'm into the 60's and 70's. My favourite bands are: Fleetwood Mac, Stevie Nicks, The Doors... I also like poetry and artists. Please contact: Katinka Kukorelly, 5 Ch. du Claiset, 1256 Troinex, Geneva, SWITZERLAND.

GLAMSTERS & A.O.R.ISTS wanted to correspond with, M/F any age. Into Signal, Tuff, P.B.F., XYZ, Noize Toys, B.B.J., M.S.G., B.Gang, Tall Stories etc. Richie, 45 Rockingham Terrace, Briton Ferry, Neath, West Glamorgan, SA11 2PF, UNITED KINGDOM.

DEATH TRADERS WANTED Currently trading with an LP/demo/live list of 1,000, but I need more people to write to. I'd especially like to hear from people in the US, but please send lists of any size, wherever you live. Current favourite bands are: Carcass, Cradle Of Filth, Godflesh, Pitch Shifter, Die Laughing, Anathema, My Dying Bride, Morbid Symphony, Skyclad. Also into stuff by Terminus, Blaggers I.T.A., Cowboy Killers, stuff like that. If interested in trading with someone honest, reliable and quick contact: Mark, 8 St.Serfs Grove, Clackmannan, FK10 4SP, SCOTLAND.

DEF LEPPARD: If you want to get rocked, write to me. I'm 19-year-old, male and also into Iron Maiden, Scorpions, Europe, Gun, Metallica, Judas Priest, A-Ha and many, many more. All letters answered. Write to: Kailash Bhojwani, 5B Nikitara Street, Ayii Omoloyitae, Nicosia 151, CYPRUS.

21-YEAR-OLD Metal princess would like to meet a wonderful male long-haired friend from anywhere. If you're tall and good looking, into heavy/thrash metal, and with many other interests as well, don't hesitate and write to me. All long letters with photos answered. Karin, Dvorakova 7, 79395 Mesto, Albrechtice, CZECHOSLOVAKIA.

CALLING ALL METAL GUITARISTS! Do you have transcriptions to my favourite bands? Do you buy music books/magazines? If so I'd like to trade. I've got about 100 songs. I like thrash, metal, alternative and death. I'm particularly looking for new Megadeth, new Maiden, FNM, Anthrax, Slayer and Testament. Write to: Andy, Hollycroft, Wyche Lane, Bunbury, Tarporley, Cheshire, CW9 9PD.

I'M a cool dude female kind'o'thing looking for a cool dude male kind'o' thing to write to on paper, through the postal service kind'o'thing, preferably sooner than me, but not necessary. Age 16+. Jo Robertson, 44 Arundel Ave., Flixton, Manchester, M31 3NG.

FEMALE, 34, into HM/HR, especially Metallica, seeks penbangers anywhere, and local males/females for friendship, laughs, gigs, pubs, clubs. I'm surrounded by trendies and baggy trousers, so c'mon out of hiding all you metalheads, save me from a fate worse than death and get scribbling to: Catherine, 126 Albion Towers, Salford, Manchester, M5 4AH, ENGLAND.

FEMALE, 14, listens to Massacre, Death, Metallica, Pestilence, Slayer, Deicide, Sepultura, Atheist, Danzig, Misfits and many more, wants penfriends from anywhere. Write to: Helen, 10 Beechwood Manor, Dundonald, Co.Down, BT16 OBL, N.IRELAND.

FEMALE, 18, into My Dying Bride, Carcass, Morgoth, Nocturnus, Deicide, Tiamat etc. Would love to hear from long-haired males 20+, especially from overseas. Write to: Marcia, 127 Victoria Road, Northwich, Cheshire, CW9 5RQ, ENGLAND. Please send a photo.

16-YEAR-OLD, male, Chili Pepper obsessional. Wants females with positive mental attitude - for friendship (more?). Also interested to hear from anyone with live recordings/rarities of the Chili's. Simon, Doughton Cottage, Walford, Ross-On-Wye, Herefordshire, HR9 5RR, ENGLAND.

DEF LEPPARD: A 16-year-old girl (me) loves Def Leppard and is looking for their EP "The Def Leppard EP", also looking for everything about them (interviews, articles, photos) and for articles about Steve Clark's death. And I'm looking for penpals, especially from England, who are into Def Leppard. I'm also into Zeppelin, Purple, Maiden, NWOBHM groups etc. Write to: Helen Metania, 6 Galatias Str., 183 44 Moschate, GREECE.

MALE, 22, into Mr Big, Ozzy, Magnum, Gun, Def Leppard, would like to hear from females in the South of England. Write soon to: Kingsley Powers, Paton Hostel, St.Piers, St.Piers Lane, Lingfield, Surrey, RH7 6PW.

AUBURN HAIRED, tall, attractive 21-year-old female into: Extreme, Chili Peppers, Def Leppard, Aerosmith and loads more, wants males and females 18+ to write to and hopefully meet for gigs etc. Sense of humour + ability to hold down a drink or 3 a must! So get scribblin' to: Sharon Rhodes, 21 Rockingham Road, Bispham, Blackpool, Lancashire, OL4 2NS, ENGLAND.

TAPE TRADERS WELCOME! Glasgow rocker, male, 27, into Rose Tattoo, Angry Anderson, Buster Brown, Buffalo, Spinal Tap, Queen, AC/DC, Sweet, Show-Ya, The Screaming Jets, The Angels, Sex Pistols, The Almighty, Gun, Candy Harlots, Push Push, Nazareth, Roxus, Free, Bad Company, Metallica, 2 Tribes, and many more good rock bands. Seeks females from GLASGOW AREA only. Plus wants to hear from penbangers anywhere in the world, seeks females from Japan. Photo's if poss. So get writing to: John Shearer, 30 Chancellor St., Partick, Glasgow, G11 5RL, SCOTLAND. PS - Video traders also welcome.

MALE - 20/10/72, would like to speak with lots of people from anywhere. Into: Righteous Pigs, Venom (old), Pestilence, Destruction, Scum Of The Earth, Bathory, Dark Throne, Rancor, Napalm Death, Sepultura, Possessed (Swing Of The Axe Is The Best), or anything. Answer all letters. Shannon Foy, 202 Burwood Hwy, Burwood, Melbourne, Victoria, 3125 AUSTRALIA.

ATTRACTIVE long-haired male death/thrasher looking for females into the same from the Oldham, Manchester, Rochdale area for possible relationship. A long-haired slim attractive non-smoker would be perfect. Write to (with photo if poss): John Winterbottom, 157 Garforth St., Chadderton, Oldham, OL9 6RN.

PONTIUS PROPHET Does anyone have this bands 1988 demo? Send fus a taped copy of this and I'll trade you an original of the Dr.Butcher demo - London's leading death metal band. Tim, 6 Culverden Road, London, SW12 9LP, ENGLAND.

VIDEO!! Good quality video traders from all over the world wanted. Your list gets mine. Everything from Syd Barrett's Pink Floyd to Ozzy, Maiden, Guns, Kiss, Metallica and more. Write to: G.Hornes, Box 80, N-5212 Softeland, NORWAY.

19-YEAR-OLD Hardcore'n'thrash freak into: Metallica, Slayer, Nirvana, RHCP, Insted, Fungazi, Vorhee's, Slapshot, Judge, Ministry, needs contact with females and males in North East area. Stuart, 54 Frank St., Gilesgate, Durham, DH1 2JF.

WANTED! Anything on Pearl Jam, especially videos. If you can help me, please get intouch. Pearl Jam fans also more than welcome. Nadia Piccardo, Corso Colombo 16/10, 17100 Savona, ITALY.

ANY collectors of Uriah Heep and all related (Ken Hensley, David Bryan, Lucifers Friend w/J.Lawton etc...) I'm looking for anything (books, news and mag articles, t.shirts, rare videos, fan club info, 45's - anything). Plus information on members who left the band (John Lawton, John Sloman, Pete Goalby). Would like to set up a fan club and would like to write to former members. Anything would be appreciated. Please write to: Kevin Julie, 5 Louis Ave., Apt 316, St. Catherines, Ontario, CANADA. L2M 6RS. P.S. I also collect stuff on Alice Cooper, Ozzy, Dio, Sabbath, Deep Purple, Rainbow - Got Anything?

HI! My name is Isa. I'm looking for penfriends from all over the world. I'm 20 and my favourite group is Def Leppard (I'm looking for any kind of merchandise on them) and I also like Metallica, GN'R and others. Write to: Isabella Odorici, Via Sega 1, 41058 Vignola (Modena), ITALY.

HI! I'm a 21-year-old bored male currently detained at Her Majesty's pleasure. My favourite groups are: Motley Crue and GNR. I am looking for females of similar age for friend/relationship. You must be able to take a joke! Photo appreciated - Please write and make my day 'punk'. AF1553, C.S., HMP Durham, Old Elvet, Durham, DH1 3HU, ENGLAND.

HELLO to all fellow penbangers!! 17-year-old female here, looking for male/female persons (17+ only) to write to or maybe even meet!! (who knows!!). Into Sepultura, Metallica, Skid Row, Little Angels, Mind Funk, Megadeth and others. So if you like any of the above write if you may (with a photo enclosed if possible) to: Tracy Taylor, Mauve Cottage, Upper Langford, Bristol, BS18 7DH, ENGLAND.PENPALS MF1 CONTINUED

HELLO, Paul here. I'm looking to trade/write with people into Motorhead, Motorhead & Motorhead. So if you're into Motorhead, then what the hell are you writing for. I'd also like to hear from female Motorhead fans - do you exist? Write to: Paul Goddard, 7 Windsor Road, Newport, Gwent., S.WALES NP9 8NR.

ALL FEMALES, any age, anywhere, get scribblin' to a bored male. My fave bands are: GN'R, Iron Maiden, Motley Crue, Skid Row etc. Photos most definitely appreciated + all letters most definitely answered. Ian, Chapel Hill Farm, Troon, Camborne, Cornwall, ENGLAND TR14 9JP.

EXTREME FANATIC!! 18-year-old female lookin' for penbangers from all over the world, English or French. Photo if possible. All letters will be answered. Also, I will pay big $$$ for anything on EXTREME!! Other fave bands are: Led Zep, RHCP, Metallica, Skid Row and The Doors. Write to: Lynne Arbez, Box 295, St.Claude, MB, CANADA, ROG 1ZO.

TAPE TRADERS WANTED: We need concerts etc (audio) by the following... Jane's Addiction, Bodycount, Spreadeagle, Nirvana, Ratt, Cinderella, Judas Priest, WASP, Guns N'Roses and of course Metallica. Your list gets mine (250 titles and growing) but only if you want to trade! Adrian Parker, 29 Manuka St., Stokes Valley, Wellington, NEW ZEALAND.

QUICK, honest traders/penpals wanted, have comparatively small list, but lots of unual things. I have VoiVod, Celtic Frost, Watchtower, Megadeth, Rush, Exodus etc... mostly late eighties. I despeartely want Watchtower stuff, bootlegs, demos, whatever you've got. Also Fates Warning & Rush (live Cygnus X-1 anybody?). Rob Carrier, 65 Ireton Road, Market Harborough, Leicestershire, LE16 9NU.

MALE, 23, seeks female in the North East of England. I'm into glam/sleaze/HR and I also like horror and martial arts films. My fave bands include Baton Rouge, Helter Skelter, PBF, Tyketto, Poison and lots more. Pleaze write to: Andy, 5 Weeds, Westgate In Weardale, Bishop Auckland, Co.Durham DL13 1JZ. PS Looks not important, but photoz appreciated!

HI! I'm a 16-year-old girl who's into Ugly Kid Joe, Nirvana, Red Hot Chili Peppers, Faith No More, Little Angels, Guns N'Roses and tonz more! I'd love to hear from anyone with similar interests: Emma, 11 Bede Walk, Reading, Berkshire, RG2 7UE, ENGLAND. PS I'll ansa all!

20-YEAR-OLD gothic/industrial type is currently recruiting new penpals from anywhere to write to + meet for gigs, clubs etc. Into: Ministry, KMFDM, Rev.Co., Godflesh, My Dying Bride, Nephilim, Sister, Scorn, Christian Death and many more different bands. Chris, 7 Beech Lane, Romiley, Stockport, Cheshire, SK6 4AL.

GOTH!! Mature 17-year-old guy, highly interested in getting some contact in England (especially in and around London). Worships music like: My Bloody Valentine, Nosferatu, Curve, Lush, Cure, Cocteau Twins, Dead Can Dance, Ride, Sisters, Nico, Fields, (old) Christian Death, Sonic Youth, Rosetta Stone, State Of Grace, Faith No More, Jane's Addiction, The Cranes (Godz!) etc. I hope there's someone out there who are interested in learning to know each other through letters and perhaps visiting one day. I'm from Denmark and here's my address: Thomas Bogh Larsen, Bjerrelund 20, 2660 Brondby, Strand, DENMARK.

ANARCHIST into hardcore, crossover and industrial/avantgarde music wants to correspond with people all over the world. Favourite bands are: Dead Kennedys, RDP, Agnostic Front, Murphy's Law, Test Dept., Ministry, Godflesh, Einsturzende Neubaten, Swamp Terrorists, DRI, Young Gods, Type O Negative, Painkiller, Naket City etc. I also want to discuss ideas with (real) anarchists or anyone with opposed ideas that can justify their points of view. Write to: Frederico M.P., Rua Tomas Da Anunciacao N.9, GoDir, 2675, Odivelas, PORTUGAL.

HI! I'm a 22-year-old female seeking penpals from everywhere, especially Ireland/Dublin. I'm into Pantera, Napalm Death, Pestilence, Sepultura, Obituary, Skid Row, Kreator, Soundgarden, Paradise Lost, Deicide, Unleashed, Izzy Stradlin etc. Besides I'm looking for everything on Pantera, especially Phil Anselmo (photos, posters, articles, videos etc) and Izzy Stradlin. Write soon to: Andrea Paulsen, Eclhstr. 5, 4100 Duisburg 28, WEST GERMANY.

HELLO! I'm a metal-freak (18, female) and I'm looking for anything (interviews/reports out of magazines, fan club addresses and many more) on the bands TNT and WASP. (I have tons of stuff out of German, American, Japanese and other magazines to trade with!!) Do you have any material I would be interested in. Don't hesitate and write to: Sonja Vitolo, Wandererstr. 109, 8500 Nurnberg 80, WEST GERMANY.

TO any human metal-head! If you're 16 and over, if you can't help yourself on being a maniac everytime you listen to metal music, if you're open-minded to different views, if metal is your way of limving and you want to write to someone about your life, your joys and problems and you want the same from someone then write to me. I adore heavy, thrash and death metal. It would be nice if you sent a photo to. Sophia Kongetsof, Dimokritou 1, TK 67100, Xanthi, GREECE.

SEARCHING for more traders, need Fear Of God, Lizzy Borden, Lethal, Celtic Frost, Fates Warning, Nephilim, SOM, Hades, Sanctuary, Watchtower, Toxik, Confessor, Helstar, Realm, Dream Theater, Savatage, Crimson Glory etc. Has 100's to trade. Fast and reliable. Write now to: Tony Hagan, RR1 Box 487, Lakeview Ave., Westville, New Jersey, 08093, USA.

HI! I have cuttings, posters, promos etc from AC/DC to ZZ Top to trade. I need everything about Zappa. Gogo Krampota, Box 92, 1092, Vienna, AUSTRIA.

HI! I'm a Brazilian girl of 15 and I'd like to make friends from all over the world! I'm into: Extreme, Slaughter, Warrant, Motley Crue, Van Halen, Iron Maiden, Metallica, Skid Row, Mr.Big and many others! All letters answered! Please write to: Raquel Serrano, Rua Jesuino Arruda, 122/41-B, CEP 04532-080, Sao Paulo-SP, BRAZIL. Photo if possible.

ITALIAN GIRL, 21, into rock (especially GN'R, LA Guns, FNM and more) and localz needs long-haired hard-rocking ale penpals, from USA and GB especially. So, guys just get a pen and write to: Simona Naldini, Via Lampredi 14, 50134 Firenze, ITALY. Pictures are very welcome!

TAPE TRADERS & penpals wanted! I'm 17, into most death, doom, thrash and some alternative metal. Especially Entombed, Dismember, Tiamat, Benediction, Stillborn, Solitude Aeturnus, L7, Smashing Pumpkins, Pearl Jam, NIN and many more. I have a list of 180+ albums and 50+ albums. No rip offs or inferior recordings. I'm reliable. So send your lists to: A. Romani, 60 Dyfed Avenue, Townhill, Swansea, West Glamorgan, SA1 6NF, WALES.

AMERICAN HEAVY ROCK FAN looks for friends into the same kind of music, in order to swap CD's and VHS videos. Your list gets mine. Everyone's welcome. Alessandro Lilli, Via Monti N.35, 45100 Rovigo, ITALY.

23-YEAR-OLD male from Russia looking for males and females, who want to exchange worldwide thrash and hard rock records for Russian records (thrash, heavy, rock, classical, folk). I need only LP's, EP's, mini-LP's and CD's. Favourite groups are: Metallica, Death, King Diamond, Sepultura, Ozzy, Maiden, Nazareth, Alice Cooper (70-75) etc. Write to: Dmitriy Youriev, KB.62, 36/29 Malinovskogo, Rostov-On-Don, 344104, RUSSIA.

METAL PENBANGERS WANTED! M/F, any age from anywhere. Into Metallica, Skid Row, Warrant, Kiss, Pearl Jam, Nymphs, Love/Hate, Alice In Chains, Slaughter, Danger Danger - metal, goth, glam, thrash, sub-pop and loads more. Traders welcome (I've a fairly big LP list). Send letters/lists to: Pat, 5 Canal View, Daingean, Co.Offaly, IRELAND.

CD TRADERS from all over the world. Your unwanted CD's. I can trade for CD's/LP's from my country. I'm into thrash, HM, punk, mainstream rock etc. All serious letters will be answered. Write to: Milan Kofranek, Box 4, 162 00 Praha 616, CZECHOSLOVAKIA.

GREETINGS FROM THE DARK SIDE! I'm a 15-year-old female looking for penbangers, between the ages of 16 and up, from anywhere in the world. I'm into anything that's hard and heavy, but my taste does vary along the line. So if you're into the morbid way of living, write to: Kym Arpino, P.O.Box 78693, Sandton, 2146, SOUTH AFRICA.

IN prison with the blues, would really like to hear from you. I am into heavy metal and rock. I love fast cars and faster women. I am thirty something, very open-minded with interesting past. Prefer women 25 and older to write. James E.Bigby 000997, Ellis One Unit, Huntsville, TX 77343, USA.

LONELY long-haired dude, 22, fed up searching for Miss Right, so a letter will do, nothing to occupy my mind at the moment, except my loud stereo and smokes. Likes most loud music from GNR to a relaxation like Pink Floyd. Any females 17-23 please write to: Leigh Wright, Animal Welfare Trust, Tylers Way, Watford By Pass, WD2 8HQ, ENGLAND. Please enclose a photo if possible.

PEARL JAM: Anything wanted - cuttings, live tapes, videos, photos etc. Also on: Mother Love Bone, Temple Of The Dog, Green River & Malfunkshun - will buy or swap - lots of material to trade on the above or any other band. Also Pearl Jam fans welcome - Alessia Tipa, Via Mignone 21/2, 17100 Savona, ITALY.

ALBUMS WANTED! By the following bands - Candlemass, King Diamond, Nocuturnus, Overkill, Voivod, Sabbat, Skyclad, Venom, Jane's Addiction, Metal Church, Scatterbrain, Ludichrist, Celtic Frost & Watchtower. Will pay for good recordings. No rip offs. Send lists with prices to: Rohit Nair, 603 Wing 3A, Green Acres, Lokhandwala Complex, Andheri (W), Bombay 400058, INDIA.

SCORPIONS, IRON MAIDEN, METALLICA Do any of these bands interest you? I am looking for people from around the world to write to. Even if you hate them, we can argue why. It doesn't matter about your age, looks, taste or the place you live. Hope to har from everyone soon. Joanne Laroche, 200 Ambroise, Windsor, Quebec, J1S 1H4, CANADA.

FEMALE, 16, into Sepultura, Metallica, Cancer, Wolfsbane, Paradise Lost, Morbid Angel and tons more. Seeks penpals of any age, from anywhere, M/F. Photo if poss but not essential. Write to: Rachel, 44 Mow Lane, Gillow Heath, Stoke-on-Trent, Staffordshire, ST8 6QQ, ENGLAND.

21-YEAR-OLD Female seeks demo and live tapes - into: Angelwitch, Witchfinder General, Satan, Blizkrieg, Witchfynde, Holocaust, Tytan, Tank, Raven, Saxon, Jaguar, Trespass, Tygers Of Pan Tang, Diamond HEad, Chariot, Cirith Ungol, Skyclad, Warlord, Trouble, Candlemass, Saint Vitus, Count Raven, Death SS and many more. Especially I seek Deep Machine (featuring Kevin Heybourne), Hant (Angelwitch type!!), Megadeth (14/8/90 London), Metallica (22/8/87 Donington). Write to: Akiko, A-101, 21-4 Akeno, Takatsuki, Osaka, 569 JAPAN. PS I only have a small list - sorry!

HELLO! My name is Oli, I'm a 17-year-old girl from Romania. I want to know rockers from all over the world. No matter what sex or age. My favourite bands are: DRI, Death, Metallica, Cathedral, Megadeth and many more. Please write in English to: Olivia Florian, NR:122, cod 1995, Jud:Timis, loc: Ortisoara, ROMANIA.

HI! I'm a Spanish girl totally crazy about heavy metal, looking for penbangers from all over the world. Doesn't matter what groups you like. Scandinavians please write as well!! Helga Blazquez Visedo, Avda De Los Angeles 61, 4oA, 28903 Getafe, Madrid, SPAIN.

I'M looking for local(ish) women to write to/meet for evenings out. My name is Paul, I'm 26 and into older classic metal: Motorhead, AC/DC, Judas Priest, Deep Purple, Sabbath etc., so if you fancy cheering up a shy manic depressive then put pen to paper and write to me: Paul Goddard, 7 Windsor Road, Newport, Gwent, NP9 8NR, ENGLAND.

HI! I'm a 16-year-old male into Giant, Faith No More, Def Leppard, Pearl Jam, Metallica, GNR, Manics, Skid Row, Extreme, Love/Hate and loads more. I would like to hear from any 15+ females in Dorset/Somerset/Wiltshire area into rock/metal for gigs or just having a good time with maybe a relationship. Photo appreciated with first letter but not essential. Rick, 5 Minterne Magna, Dorchester, Dorset DT2 7AR.

FEMALE, sick of the indie scene wants to write/meet people with good taste in music, such as heavy/thrash/death metal particularly Slayer, Sepultura, Obituary, Guns N'Roses, Metallica, Pantera, Megadeth etc. Wants male/female penfriends from all over. Liberty, 26B Shepherds Hill, London N6 5AH, ENGLAND.

CIAO! I'm a 17-year-old female into GN'R, Extreme, Queensryche, Faith No More, Nirvana - even something softer. I'm looking for guys and girls from everywhere in the world to write to me: Marialisa Santi, Via Martignacco 61, 33100 Udine, ITALY.

For those about to rock...

Every issue we aim to bring you the hottest new talent that's gonna be coming your way soon. Here JERRY EWING unearths forthcoming LA rockers

RAGE AGAINST THE MACHINE

RAGE AGAINST THE MACHINE (L-R): TIMMY C., TOM MORELLO, ZACK DE LA ROCHA AND BRAD WILK

When you cop a load of "Bullet In The Head" you know that Los Angeles based rockers **Rage Against The Machine** mean business.

Just a victim of the in-house drive by, spits vocalist Zack de la Rocha as Tom Morello whacks out some brutal riffs and Brad Wilk (drums) and Timmy C. (bass) lay down a tough-as-nails beat.

Rage Aaginst The Machine are a band with a message, and they tell you in no uncertain terms. They combine the streetwise attitude of punk, the crunch of metal and the politically-charged atmosphere of rap. You are going to love them.

Some of you may remember Morello from funk metallers Lock Up, who released the excellent "Something Bitchin' This Way Comes" album on Reprise a few years back. Vocalist de la Rocha was in hardcore outfit Inside Out and Wilk played with Pearl Jam's Eddie Vedder, before the singer got his break with the Seattle mob.

Rage Against The Machine are set to release their debut album on Epic Records early next year. It's been produced by the band themselves and Garth Richardson (the latter having worked with the Red Hot Chili Peppers).

So far the foursome have supported Pearl Jam, Public Enemy, Porno For Pyros (former Jane's Addiction singer Perry Farrell's latest outfit), Body Count and also played at the Los Angeles Lollapalooza dates. Britain has already had a chance to catch the band live, when they supported Suicidal Tendencies in London recently, and then played a headline at London's Borderline.

With Rage Against The Machine citing Malcolm X and Che Guevera as influences alongside Led Zeppelin and The Clash, it should come as no surprise that the band support a wide variety of causes, including anti-vivisection, anit-police brutality watch groups and the anti-censorship organisation.

Rage Against The Machine's ten-track debut features no samples, keyboards or synthesizers. Get ready!

THE FRAMES (L-R): NOREEN O'DONNEL, JOHN CARNEY, COLM MAC CON IOMAIRE, BINZER, DAVID ODLUM and GLEN HANSARD

They're Irish. They're hard rock. They're folk music. They're indie. They are THE FRAMES. Guitarist/ vocalist Glen Hansard explains matters to MIKE MERCURY

Sometimes you can *hear* it. Sometimes you can see it. Sometimes you *feel* it. With The Frames, it goes further - I *believe* it. Witness the emergence of a band who will be among *the* names for '94, maybe even '93. Never heard of 'em? You will. Already setting charts and ears ablaze with their eclectically charming, yet dynamically forged debut album, "Another Love Song", this sextet (rhythm guitarist/vocalist Glen Hansard, vocalist Noreen O'Donnell, guitarist David Odlum, fiddler Colm Mac Con Iomaire, bassist John Carney and drummer Paul 'Binzer' Brennan) have recently been adding to their growing legend via a UK tour that has seen them receive rapturous responses. And yet...

And yet, The Frames are almost totally at odds with the prevailing winds. They aren't exactly hard rock, but they appeal to hard rockers. They aren't precisely folk musicians, yet folkies are attracted to their sound. They don't fit into the indie scene, yet indie fans applaud them enthusiastically.

"We fit in with everything," acknowledges Hansard. "And we aren't ready at the moment to try and define exactly what sort of band we are. I must admit that the situation does bug us. But all we can do is carry on playing and hopefully we'll eventually find our own niche. You see, the main problem with being as diverse as we are is that you really can't take any leap forward until you fit into a slot."

Yet this very refusal to conform to accepted modes of musical marketing has made The Frames an outstanding prospect at a time when originality, freshness and individuality are at a premium. Drawing on influences ranging from the Sex Pistols to The Waterboys, Van Morrison to The Pixies, The Velvet Underground to Bob Dylan, Led Zeppelin to T-Rex, this Dublin-based act are in the throes of a creative dream. They have no preconceptions, no preconditions - and the usually conservative British music fan has responded positively. What's more, they represent merely the start of what promises to be an energetic revival in contemporary Irish music.

"Until recently, a lot of Irish bands felt that they had to sound like U2 in order to get noticed, But we already have one U2, what do we need any more for? Now, there is a really great climate in Dublin. The competition between bands is very intense and that is leading to individual music. There are some wonderful bands ready to break out from Dublin. Watch out for Engine Alley and an incredible, yet so far unsigned, group called Lar."

Hansard (who professes to being "a bit fucked up" and into The Pixies and whimsical folk introvert Nick Drake) cites his music background as belonging literally to the streets. Because The Frames were born out of the busking tradition, with Hansard, O'Donnell, Odlum and Iomaire all performing regularly in the most public of situations.

"When you're busking, if you can hold ten people on a street corner then you are doing really well. You depend completely on your talents as a performer. People don't have to stop and watch you; if they do, then it's a compliment. Moreover, you don't attract one type of audience, which is perhaps a reason why The Frames are so diverse. We get everybody from 50-year-olds right down to kids aged eight listening to what we do. As a busker I used to do songs by Van Morrison, REM and The Waterboys among others."

Now, though, the band face a very different type of pressure, as the economic demands of Island Records either clashes with and tears apart their own desire to retain artistic integrity, or else underpins this very creativity as the shift towards trendiness leads to huge financial gains. Whatever, for the first time since I saw U2 opening up for Talking Heads and Orchestral Maneouvres In The Dark at The Electric Ballroom in Camden during late '79, I have a feeling that Ireland are about to throw up an important band in a global context.

And the immediate future is well mapped out. An EP titled "Turn On Your Record Player" (featuring a cover of T-Rex's "Life's A Gas" among the four songs) has just been put out. Another UK tour is planned for early '93, to be followed by what could be a crucial first visit to the States, with work on the second album (for which much of the material is already written and included in their live set) due to begin in the Summer.

For Hansard, it's all a long way removed from his role as Outspan Foster in the highly acclaimed Alan Parker movie *The Commitments*. Indeed, it says much for the strength within The Frames that this actorial role has almost become a side issue, rather than dominating press releases and interviews.

"You are the first person in ages to bring up the subject in an interview. The film is two years old - it's gone. Sure, it was a milestone in my life, but I see myself as a musician not an actor. What's important now are The Frames."

There is little doubt that The Frames have enormous potential. And those bands who do write their own page in history, rather than merely acting as carbon paper, always transcend categorisation. It might seem a long way from the street corner to the world's stadia, but I've a feeling that The Frames are about to make that journey seem obscenely comfortable. As I said back at the beginning, I *believe* this is a band who will make an impact that goes beyond the balance sheet. ☘

The album "Another Love Song" and the EP "Turn On Your Record Player" are both available through Island.

PICTURE THIS!

Haircuts that changed the world

FREE INDIE SUPPLEMENT TO PULL OUT AND KEEP

EMF - It's them!

Rubicon, Inspiral Carpets, Teenage Fanclub and more...

SUPPLEMENT

MF

NO. 1 JANUARY 1993

Welcome to the first free supplement magazine with your debut issue of MF. Every month we'll be giving away a free magazine, each one tackling a different issue or looking at a different subject.

Sometimes we'll be looking at a particular genre of music, sometimes we'll be looking at a particular band, sometimes we'll be doing something different altogether. What we will be doing is providing you with something interesting to read along with MF's excellent coverage of the rock scene.

Please bear in mind, however, that this isn't MF magazine, but a free supplement. As such it isn't always going to reflect what MF is, although mostly it'll be an in-depth extension of what MF is all about. But if you don't happen to like what is in the supplement one month, remember, you don't have to read it! Just put it to one side.

This free supplement is for your enjoyment, but if you do happen to take particular offence to one months subject matter, remember, a letter moaning about it is a waste of time. We won't be printing any. What we will be taking notice of, however, are letters from you, the reader, suggesting what you'd like to see. These we will be scrutinising and acting upon. So get writing...

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IT'S ONLY ROCK'N'ROLL

It started like this, really... There I was in the local record store waiting to be served and glancing around as one does, when I caught sight of the chap next to me. In one hand he eagerly clutched a copy of the rather good new Screaming Trees platter "Sweet Oblivion". In the other? Why, the new Shamen album "Boss Drum", of course!

Now I don't know about you, but although I don't see anything particularly wrong in owning both (indeed I do own both), a few years ago this would have been deemed nigh on impossible.

Yes, of course he may have been buying one (or perhaps both) as a present, but I don't think so...

And then...

Well I was walking down the street and this kid passed me in a Ned's Atomic Dustbin T-shirt. Fine band, great T-shirt. See a lot of them about. Nothing odd there. But you don't see many Metallica patches on the jackets of these kids. Or do you?

Five years ago it was metal or bust, right? Death to false metal and all that crap. Never felt too comfortable with that. Did you? Maybe you did, maybe you didn't, who knows? Only you, I guess. But this year something seems to have happened. It's not like that anymore, believe you me.

Maybe it's the influx and immense popularity of the Seattle bands, or maybe it goes back further. What I do know is that in 1992, more people seemed ready to check out a far more varied selection of musical acts than ever before.

Of course, you're always gonna have your tunnel-visioned die-hards, and good luck to them. But for a lot of people, it seems there's more to it than that.

Reading Festival seems as good a place as any to start. Compared with the tired and jaded sounds that came out of Donington, this was a breath of fresh air. A bill featuring acts across the board. Nirvana,

TEENAGE FANCLUB

L7, Mudhoney, Screaming Trees, Public Image Ltd, Rollins, Manic Street Preachers and Therapy? added some spicey meat to the event, but were accepted as happily by the majority as the likes of The Wonder Stuff, Nick Cave, Public Enemy, Ride, EMF, Beastie Boys and Teenage Fanclub. A far cry from 1983, when reggae act Steel Pulse were disgracefully bottled off by a predominantly dumb-ass metal crowd, wouldn't you say so?

Then there was Lollapalooza in America. A gathering of tribes that saw indie acts like Lush and the evergreen Jesus And Mary Chain playing to the same audienec as Pearl Jam, Soundgarden, Ministry et al. Both events on either side of the Atlantic not only proved massively popular, but showed that some facets of the hard rock and indie genres seem to be shifting towards each other and more and more people are happy to accept it as a fact.

But there's more than that. Anyone who went to see Mudhoney, Ministry or Nirvana in 1992 can't have failed to notice the diversity of the audiences. Equally, both EMF and Inspiral Carpets, who have recently played at Brixton, attracted a far more rock-orientated audience than you once might have thought. Doubtless the same will go for forthcoming shows by both Ned's Atomic Dustbin and Carter U.S.M., especially seeing as the latter have the foresight to take out Mucky Pup as support!

Heavy Metal Is Crap! Discuss. That was the gist of a recent inkie exposé of hard rock music. Well, if Johnny Rodd's (W.A.S.P.) performance at Donington was anything to go by, then yes, it probably is. In 1992/3, can you really take seriously a man in his 30s prancing around in lycra ballet tights with suspectly *big* hair? No, I didn't think so.

RUBICON

Pic Shelly Mitchell

Of course not all heavy metal is crap. There's a lot of good in it. But most of those good aspects have resulted in the major overhaul that has taken place within the genre over the last few years. And now, the enormous popularity of acts like Pearl Jam, Alice In Chains, Soundgarden, Chili Peppers, Revcos and especially Faith No More (along with those already mentioned), as well as the emergence of new acts like Terrorvision, The Atom Seed, The Beyond and Crowforce has opened hard rock music up to a wider audience. An audience who refuse to be pigeon-holed into liking one style of music. Remember, Iron Maiden can't go on forever!

Along with this wider acceptance come a host of bands, most of whom would have been derided a few years ago by the rock hordes. But now it is widely felt that whilst more and more hard rock-orientated acts become attractive to a wider audience, thus many acts of a more alternative persuasion are shifting in a heavier direction. Point in case: both EMF and Inspiral Carpets, whose recent albums find themselves rooted in strong rock traditions.

Indeed, as the hard rock fraternity now also accepts with open arms acts like Sonic Youth and Soul Asylum as well, the future for this often looked down upon genres looks decidedly bright and most definitely interesting - for once!

Whether this trend continues, who knows? We aren't suggesting that the future of hard rock lies in the indie scene, or that all indie acts are worthy of your attention. Past history shows that there will be those who find the thought of listening to a band who don't deck themselves out in denim and leather and adopt the usual, tired clichés too much to handle. So be it. But there are also those who want to check out what they may find interesting...

We don't claim this to be a definitive guide to indie music, far from it. This is merely a look at some bands whom you may not have listened to yet, but perhaps you should, and after reading this, you may find you want to. Read on and enjoy...

JERRY EWING

THE END OF T

Ashwell & Morden in North Hertfordshire does an exceedingly good impression of the back of beyond, especially on a bleak and dreary and decidedly cold winter's morning.

Exiting the train at a deserted station, myself and photographer Shelley Mitchell are met with, well, not much really. A few houses, none displaying any tell-tale whisps of smoke arising from the chimney stack, some deserted cars, and a pub that no-one has left or entered since we've been standing on the grass verge at the side of what one assumes must be Ashwell & Morden's main road is all that surrounds us. It is your archetypal strangely deserted rural English town.

If it was night I think I might be scared. If I was waiting here to be met by Fields Of The Nephilim I know I'd be scared. Terrified, in fact, that some Lovecraftian nightmare, shrouded in dry-ice, would swoop down upon poor little unsuspecting me. Fortunately it's day, and I'm only waiting for four-fifths of what was once Fields Of The Nephilim. A couple of cars dash by (none carrying our hosts) and Shelley needs the toilet and enters the pub. Her return brings news of at least two inhabitants. Saints preserve us. There is life in Ashwell & Morden.

Well there may be life in Ashwell & Morden, but there's no dry ice and we're still waiting. Perhaps it's a bizarre wind-up on behalf of someone. Perhaps someone's forgotten we're here. Who knows? All we do know is that it's bloody cold.

Out of the uneasy (and surprising) mid-day gloom a car draws near and a recognisable face peers towards us. At last! It's Paul Wright, guitarist with Rubicon (the four-fifths of the Nephs) and the towering figure of vocalist Andy Delany, the additional fifth that completes the new Rubicon package.

"Bin' waiting long?" grins Wright. "Sorry. Fancy a pint?"

Refreshed we're soon hurtling towards Ashwell, a different venue altogether and home base for Rubicon. It's evident more people live here, including bass player Tony Pettit, whose house is said base, and whose cellar is the rehearsal room for Rubicon.

Since Fields Of The Nephilim's demise, with singer Carl McCoy departing for pastures new (apparantly in search of violent thrash metal!), the remaining members, Wright and Pettit being joined by ex-Nephs Nod Wright (drums) and Peter Yates (guitar and keyboards) and acquiring the services of a Stevenage-based singer (the aforementioned Andy Delany), formed Rubicon, whose debut album "What Starts, Ends" was released earlier this year on Beggars Banquet (the same label as The Nephs).

Settled in Pettit's kitchen, surrounded by a myriad of recording equipment, Paul explains the reasons behind the Neph's demise.

"I reckon it had been coming for a while. The press tries to separate you. If you are a band and you exist in a democracy, it never comes across like that. But it's not hard to see why. He (McCoy) looked so good and his lyrics were so individual. But since "Psychonaut", things had been changing. He'd become more alienated towards us as people, and I guess it was inevitable. I thought we may have had one more album in us. It was a kind of a shock really, even though I knew it was coming."

"I wasn't," laughs Yates.

"I know you wasn't, but you're a wiser member," retorts Wright.

"No, I knew it was coming," continues Yates. "I think we all did. We were writing and he wasn't getting involved anymore. It was an inevitable course for self-destruction really."

Thus ended one of Britain's more intriguing bands of the late '80s. From the early days of spaghetti western goths of "Dawnrazor" to the more dark and mysterious "The Nephilim" (which boasted the band's biggest hit, the Sisters-ish "Moonchild") and then spiralling downwards on more intense, obviously Neph-style workouts, McCoy's image of almost a gothic version of Clint Eastwood's 'The Man With No Name', his darkly forboding lyrics, a voice that echoed too strongly of Andrew Eldritch (Sisters Of Mercy), and piercing eyes, was the Neph trademark (along with an excessive amount of dry ice!).

Rubicon deny the fact that McCoy's intensely strong image had anything to do with the split.

"If anything he rejected the fame and fortune," ponders Yates. "To the point of turning down interviews and stuff."

And thus it was over.

"We always knew that we were happy as musicians together, and we were happy with the sound we were making," states Wright. "We had our own ideas as well. The original feelings of The Nephs was getting lost at the end."

Yates pointedly eschews the idea that they might, being the majority of the band, have tried to carry it on as before.

"It's kind of naff, isn't it?" he says. "If you've got a sound, and you lose it...Obviously Carl's voice, as an instrument, was part of that sound. To get someone else in who can't pass it off as something it isn't is really naff. There have been plenty of bands that tried it and failed.

"I think we were more conscious of doing something different. The last thing we wanted was to get a Carl clone in and have comparisons to Carl when obviously the music's so different now."

"What Starts, Ends" (The Rubicon album) utilises some similar traits of The Nephilim. There's a similar imagery on the sleeve and musically it's not a million miles away from what they were doing before. What is new is a slightly lighter and definitely fresher sound to the music. And in Delany they have a man who's powerful tones don't allow a million accusing fingers to be pointed at the band.

It's not an easy album to get into, but it has depth, melody, power and a sense of urgency lacking on the last Neph studio album. Finding a singer wasn't too easy though.

"We thought the easy way to get a vocalist was to stick an ad in one of the weeklies, because that's what everyone does," claims Yates. "It just said *Name band seeks frontman*. We didn't want to specify *must be into Metallica* or anything like that, we wanted an open field. In the end we got 50 or 60 tapes and they were all jazz-funk! There was no rock, no Perry Farrells, no charismatic people. Just bog-standard jazz-funk. After that we tried a few mates, and that didn't work. Then Andy (who'd been in a few local bands) heard about it on the grapevine."

Delany picks up the story: "Their (Paul and Nod's) brother was in band's around Stevenage, and said *Carl's left Nephilim, why didn't you stick your name forward.* So I called up, got the audition..."

"We'd recorded "Rivers" on that," Yates points to a mountain of studio equipment stacked up in Pettit's kitchen, all tied to what goes on in the basement as another pot of tea is made. "It was an instrumental and we were using it to audition people. Andy came along, sang on it and it's pretty much the same version that's on the album. It just clicked."

How was it for Delany to approach a unit such as The Nephilim, who's own departed singer had been built into such a figure in the media?

"I'd always worked," he starts, "because if music is something you want to do you obviously take any chance that comes along. If you don't you may not get another chance. Whilst I wasn't thinking I was going to turn down the opportunity of filling someone else's shoes it wasn't something that I wanted to do. So I was pleased when it was a case of not doing any of the old numbers and writing a new album and having a new set. That was great news because it meant I could be myself and not have to try to please any old fans or anything.

"On the first tour we did over here I think I only heard one person shout out *Where's Carl?* That's the only reference we've had from an audience of old Nephilim fans. By the third or fourth night people were saying they were really into it and they'd follow it."

Fields Of The Nephilim, despite a massive cult following throughout both Britain and Europe, never really achieved massive mainstream breakthrough.

"I think "Elizium" (the last studio album) sold about 33,000," points out Yates. "At our peak we could sell out Brixton Academy or two nights at the Town & Country Club in London. We never made it into mainstream, so your mum would never had heard of us, but we were one of the biggest cult bands around."

Did it bother you, being a *cult* band?

"The good side of it is that we had a really fierce fan-base, which is why we got singles in the charts," explains Yates. "But it never made anyone at Radio One play it! You've got good things and you've got drawbacks. It was quite frustrating because we were in Nephilim, and we were this great big cult band that I felt it put other people off sometimes. I think when we split up it was as far as it was gonna go. I never thought Nephilim would go mainstream in terms of sales.

"I think we'd hit a plateau

HE BEGINNING

RUBICON (L-R) ANDY DELANY, TONY PETTIT, PAUL WRIGHT, PETER YATES and NOD WRIGHT

Pic Shelly Mitchell

As Fields Of The Nephilim disappear in a puff of dry ice, EUGENE SCRIBES enters the new domain of RUBICON

and weren't going to get any bigger. I think the saddest thing is seeing a band trying to keep going when they've lost it. I think we went out at our peak. It's better to burn out and all that."

Rubicon are a little more contemporary than Fields Of The Nephilim ever were. Indeed their potential audience could easily by-pass that of The Nephilim should people get past the Nephs' tag, or Rubicon themselves reach out to a wider audience.

"It was never a formula," opines Peter, whilst agreeing in principal. "Andy's got a much greater range than Carl's got and that makes it easier for us to expand musically. The whole point of music is, if you're into it then the more people that listen to it the better. I've never understood that inverted snobbery of *We don't want to play to that many people* or *We don't want to be on MTV*. That's bollocks really."

Any worries about being labelled Fields Of The Nephilim mkII? It's an easy tag to get stuck with.

"Yeah, but I don't think it will stick," retorts Delany.

But there are still certain elements in Rubicon that were evident in Nephilim. There's a certain forboding to the music, and the whole imagery surrounding the band seems familiar.

"Well, we used the same photographer (Julian Calverly) that we used to use in Nephilim for the record sleeve," admits Yates. "I think it's pretty tasteful artwork."

But the imagery may be a little too close for comfort! After all despite this being essentially a brand new band, Rubicon are still Fields Of The Nephilim with a new singer.

"I dunno," ponders Yates. "It's hard to answer that, isn't it? It's hard to say what influences people have by album sleeves. I mean, we could have made a deliberate move and dressed like Anthrax or someone, and made it how obvious it's different, but that would have been a bit crap. We'll let things take an obvious course."

"Singers generally tend to do OK for themselves when they split off, whereas bands tend to sort of take a nosedive and lose it!"

"Cheers mate!" laughs Yates.

"Well, it happens to be the truth," protests the singer. "But in our case I don't think that's going to happen. There wasn't any problem about writing, no sort of *What are we gonna do?* What came out is what came out. You know when you've written something good, and you know when you've written something that's merely average. At the end of the day I think we've come out with something good and strong and that's sellable."

So you won't be caking yourselves in flour anymore?

"Er...No," smiles Paul. "We could have done, but thankfully not. It'll save us a bit of money."

Whilst Fields Of The Nephilim found themselves in something of a rut concerning widespread appeal (the overt goth tag always quick to put off the less curious rock fan who probably would have liked the band), the current musical climate suggests that Rubicon's more direct approach may fare better.

"I always thought Nephilim would appeal to hard rock fans you know," sighs Paul. "It was heavier than a lot of bands that were popular. Everyone probably tells you this, but when we went to Europe we played a gig with New Model Army and The Oyster Band with us in the middle and everyone went down really well. But you find that over there. You'd never ever get that in England, they're a lot more open about their music. It's just something that's peculiar to England. I don't know whether it's because we've got too many bands or people are too ready to believe what they believe in the press."

"I think that rock has become much more interesting," chips in Delany. "There are so many different types of rock and fans are getting more and more into various styles without just sticking to one."

In which case Rubicon may just find themselves building more bridges than the Nephs ever did. Whilst not taking goth-dom to the metal masses a la The Cult, Rubicon's path is a different one. Powerfully brooding, intense hard rock with darker flavours, theirs is a path you would do well to follow.

Take that decisive step, although I'd give Ashwell & Morden a miss if I was you!

Rubicon's debut album "What Starts, Ends" is available through Beggars Banquet Records

STIGMATISED!

If the "Unexplained" EP saw the band starting to get heavier then EMF's second album, "Stigma", was a bold step in a brutal rock direction. Derry Brownson and Marc Decloedt explain to JERRY EWING exactly what they're up to

"You'll love the new EMF album," they told me. "They've really rocked out." Indeed I do, and indeed they have. But then again, I was always quite partial to their "Schubert Dip" debut too. The album that launched five fresh-faced youths from the Forest Of Dene to pop superstardom and the pages of the tabloids, thanks in no small terms to the annoyingly catchy strains of their mega-hit "Unbelieveable" and the supposedly OTT antics of the band on tour, best of which has to be the reporting that bass player Zac Foley sports amongst his party trick repetoire the ability to insert a whole lime up his foreskin!

Yet, for all the schoolboy ribaldry undertaken by pop's new-found demi-gods, "Schubert Dip" remains an engaging, catchy debut that has set the five-piece up for the recently released, *difficult* second album "Stigma" rather than set them as pop icons for a new age.

And now EMF feel they're ready to face the world on their own terms. Having danced across the world on a wave of techno-pop/rock accessibility, "Stigma" sees the boys flexing tattooed muscles, shaking longer hair and rocking hard. Kind of like Killing Joke met Faith No More at a rave. Harder and more mature.

"Do you like it?" enquires a slightly nervous EMF drummer Marc Decloedt of the band's latest offering.

I do. It's certainly a lot heavier.

"I know what you mean, it's like which way are we going?" he continues. "Songs like "They're Here" (opening cut) are still fun, but done in an aggressive way. We're trying to keep that techno feel, which is important to us, but there are some songs that are straightforward rock.

"But then again, I don't know. I mean, listen to the last Metallica album and it's so well produced, it's got a real rock sound, though it's not a particularly hard sounding album. Put it up against the last Ministry album and it's like out the door.

"It's weird though," he continues, "because our sound is changing so much and we're changing too, but it's like getting it down on vinyl as quick as you can. Having the time to put it out. The only thing we were worried about was how people would take us, with the big image thing we had last time..."

Aha, the *big image thing!* Pop's latest bad boys. The Forest kids made good. The foreskin frollickers of fun! EMF were a Piers Morgan wet dream, although today it's an image that flies straight out of the window when the ever-polite Decloedt offers me some of his chocolate bar! Such a strong, albeit misdirected image is unlikely to shift itself out of the public psyche as quickly as the band might like.

"It bothers us to a certain extent, because it attracts the wrong sort of people," he moans between mouthfuls of chocolate. "Because of a certain style of press we've had, you know, the *Smash Hits* kind of thing. I wish we hadn't done it, but it's fate really. If we hadn't done it we'd never have had such a big hit. I look back at it all and can't get over how young and naive we all were. It was just mucking around all the time..."

But surely an element of fun is vital to any kind of rock music? You don't want to turn into Richard Marx, do you?

"No. But it's just that the sort of bands that we're into, Faith No More, Jane's Addiction, even the Beastie Boys...I love that Beasties' recent album," he motions to a poster above my head. "Anyway, get a crowd into that, and they might take the piss and that, but they're a really solid crowd. Our image is changing. I really noticed it on the last British tour with the people we were attracting. It's always been better in America and abroad. Even though we were Number One we didn't attract young kids. It was more like skaters and stuff."

EMF's recent Brixton Academy paid testament to the fact that here in Britain too, a more rock-orientated fan is eager to see the band. Reported (quite correctly too) as being the highlight of this year's Reading Festival, playing to a crwod ready to accept the likes of EMF, Teenage Fanclub and even Ride on the same bill as the likes of Mudhoney, L7 and Screaming Trees, EMF are beginning to transcend musical boundaries.

Enter a harder-looking, hairier Derry Brownson, erstwhile samples master of the EMF sound (the line-up is completed by the aforementioned Foley, vocalist James Atkin and guitarist Ian Dench), and dancer of the distinctly crazy variety (unfortunately someone once pointed out the similarity between Brownson and Jesus Jones similar madman Iain Baker, but more of that later).

"A rock mag, Deh!" announces Decloedt eagerly!

"Yeah," enthuses the once-chubby faced youth. "You got a mag?"

"Anyway," picks up Decloedt, "they categorise everything in England. That's the worst thing. Half of the bands they say are metal aren't really metal at all. You go and see 'em, and they ain't got any balls at all. Others have and they don't get any recognition for it."

No-one in their right mind would lay claim to EMF being a metal band, but if metal is crap, as some are beginning to claim, can EMF provide a suitable, more fun-filled alternative? Perhaps.

"Look at Jane's Addiction or the Chili Peppers, they're not metal either," Brownson eagerly points out, giving perhaps some insight as to exactly where he sees his own compatriots within the great scheme of things. "I think it's a good thing and getting better. A few years ago metal was metal, your Iron Maidens, your W.A.S.P.s and that was it. But now you've got all these bands that aren't."

"It's like Faith No More," adds Decloedt. "They don't get accepted by certain metal fans, do they?"

But then it's just the same with the indie scene, from which EMF are supposed to have sprung. Die-hard fanaticism and a refusal to accept any kind of change or outsiders!

"I think there's more of a sense of humour with metal fans, though," opines Brownson. "I love it. The last CDs I bought were Motörhead, Roxy Music and Primus, you know. What can you say is metal out of that. I know that all the thrashers and skaters in America won't listen to metal, but they'll all listen to Motörhead 'till their balls drop off. That's the scene I love and that's how I've got into it. We get a lot of skaters at gigs, and even in the UK we're getting a more metal-orientated audience."

It all points to an increasing cross-over scene with bands who aren't quite metal and not wholly indie. Yet, whereas a few years ago such bands would have been derided by both sides, they now find favour with a new breed looking for something more.

"All music as a whole has crossed over now anyway," states Derry with authority. "Dance music is no longer house music. It's everything from garage, techno, even the Chili Peppers have dance remixes. The thing with us is we've worked with Butch Vig, we've worked with Afrika Bambaata and we've worked with Brian Eno. It was the same with Jane's Addiction, they never really went with one scene. They kept their options open."

But then again, it must be said that EMF have offered up no "Unbelievable" on "Stigma". Britain's pop kids are unlikely to find solace in the power of tracks like "Getting Through", "It's You" or "They're Here".

"I don't think they'll like it," laughs Mark. "Some of them will, the die-hards who will grow with us as a band, but the whole music scene's changing so much and I think that if we'd stayed doing the stuff we did we'd have got nowhere. And this is what we moved onto. I don't think anyone should lose the techno influences though, because that's going to be around for years.

"But I think we will lose a few fans, especially girls because of the way we look."

"A band can never choose their audience, though," states Derry. "They can move their music in a way in which they'd like their audience to be. Bands have to be accessible right across the board, and if they've got an edge then great. I believe that you should be able to like any band, anything."

What "Stigma" will do is bury the Jesus Jones comparisons that dogged EMF's early career, which grew out of the bands' similar techno-rock stance, as well as two keyboard men who delighted in hitting the sample key and then dancing a merry jig around the stage as the rest of the band did their thang!

"Until they bring out their new album," laughs the offending Derry, referring to an apparant 'rocking out' of all things Jesus Jones-like to boot. "They were just a rock band when I started seeing them."

I recall early Jones works, like

EMF (L-R): IAN DENCH, ZAC FOLEY, MARK DECLOEDT, JAMES ATKIN and DERRY BROWNSON

the single "Info-Freako" being termed techno-thrash, a term that makes Derry's eyes positively light up.

"That's great that," he enthuses. "Look at those two words written together. Techno-thrash. Yeah fuck, I'll check that out. You can dance to it and it's still got balls."

Brownson is also eager to point out that EMF have, in his opinion, more balls than a lot of recent metal bands, many of whom, it must be said, have faded from view after one or two mediocre albums.

"They say that because it's metal it's more credible, but they've got more throwaway bands than pop music," he insists. "I mean, you can compare Take That to Winger. Getting in the charts means nothing to us, because it's the *been there, done it* syndrome. I think that's a good attitude to have because you can move onto something else. We don't really care whether the next album sells seven million or 100,000, but with Nirvana being number one they've opened up more doors for everyone. They're a metal band, but they're not, if you see what I mean. They've got an edge, and all the crap metal bands are gonna fall by the wayside and let bands like Pearl Jam sail through."

But it's the same as the British indie scene. There are some worthwhile bands and there are some real crap bands.

"The thing with bands like Ride and Lush is that they're very straight about what they do," points out Derry. "People can put their finger on what they do and accept them for doing their guitar thing, which they're good at. But the thing about EMF is that you can't put your finger on what they do. Not many bands have worked with the people we've worked with. All our remixes keep the doors open to us, from rock, techno, ambient, whatever. If you said to Lush it might be a good idea to work with Jim Foetus to do a mix they'd think twice, whereas we'd get Demis Roussos to do a mix!"

So do the pair think that there are more rock fans prepared to give them a chance?

"Well the great thing about thrash metal music is that it's rotating all the time and going into completely different areas, whereas indie's going nowhere," states Derry. "You've got like your Suedes, with their nice vocals and distorted guitars which is great, and I do like them. But with metal, look at what Revolting Cocks were three years ago to what Ministry is today, and all the spin-offs, it takes a month for metal to do what indie will do in a year."

The whole ball started to roll publicly towards the new EMF with the release of the "Unexplained EP", which featured a cover of Iggy Pop's "Search And Destroy". The best version Iggy claims to have heard and one that prompted Radio One's Mark Goodier to enquire just how long it took the band to write it. "Not long," quipped an astute Decloedt, "seeing as Iggy Pop wrote it!" ("He ain't got a fuckin' clue," giggles Decloedt.) Still, it made the more serious-minded rock magazines sit up and really take notice.

"The way we recorded "Search And Destroy" was nothing like the original," declares Derry. "Iggy liked it so much that we were going to get him over to sing with us at the Reading Festival, but he's recording in Mexico so that will have to wait for when we tour America."

Did they feel they'd had a bum deal from the British press?

"There are some people in the press that always want to have a go," sighs Mark. "I always feel they want to stitch us up. We did this *Def II* thing on BBC, and we knew the prodcuer and then you got that idiot Normski who presents it. What a wank, and all that shitty stuff they put on screen when they show our faces. It's crap. They don't understand us, they haven't got a fuckin' clue."

EMF, however, do seem to have a clue. More so than many of the people that have written about their apparant dirty deeds. That "Stigma" won't cause a stir goes without saying. That it's a rock album to raise some eyebrows probably makes it one of the better rock albums from a British band to be released this year. Combining favoured elements of techno and pounding hard rock EMF are back doing what they do best. Making good music and causing a stir.

EMF's second album "Stigma" is available through Parlophone Records

JOINING A FANCLUB

TEENAGE FANCLUB (L-R): RAYMOND McGINLEY, GERARD LOVE, NORMAN BLAKE and BRENDAN O'HARE

They write songs called "Metal Baby" and "Satan" and even the quite wonderful "Kylie's Got A Crush On Us", indulge in some wicked feedback and write mega pop songs. They're called TEENAGE FANCLUB. JERRY EWING investigates

"I don't really see why we shouldn't appeal to a rock audience. It depends on how someone defines themselves as liking hard rock and how narrow that definition is. I think anyone who's decided what they like and what they don't like, unless we made a record that was completely stylised, then that someone might not like it, but we try not to define ourselves."

Raymond McGinley is pontificating as to whether he sees Teenage Fanclub (current indie media darlings for whom he plays guitar) as being a band that could appeal to a wider rock audience. I have to agree with his chosen answer.

Indulging a taste for American bands of a left-of-field stance (ladies and gentlemen, may I present Dinosaur Jr.), Teenage Fanclub's (who grew out of early Scottish bands BMX Bandits and Boy Hairdressers) career has thus far spawned three albums, namely "A Catholic Education", the purely instrumental "The King" and last year's quite excellent "Bandwagonesque" (final proof that they'd got over some early naming accidents) and a Top 40 hit in the irrepressibly catchy "What You Do To Me", seen them tour America, hit the road in Europe with Nirvana and triumph against the weather at this year's Reading Festival.

It is "Bandwagonesque" that should appeal to anyone whose idea of a good rock record is one that encompasses poppy harmonies ("What You Do To Me"), a dirth of grunge ("Satan") and a shoegazing stance blended with something you might expect Neil Young to come up with ("The Concept"), all rolled into a noisy guitar sound that started when the Reid brothers hit upon the idea for the Jesus And Mary Chain and has since been used by many a would-be pop star. Yet, until now it is an album that has mainly been encompassed by the indie kids, thus missing out a potentially large rock market.

"We don't think *Oh, we only listen to one kind of music,*" protests McGinley at that peculiar little foible of British audiences, narrow-mindedness. "I mean, earlier today I was listening to AC/DC's "Back In Black". I don't think there's any big deal in liking different styles of music anymore. And now, with what can be termed indie or alternative music, it's more kind of cool to do that indulgent guitar solo or whatever."

McGinley has a point, and it would appear to be one that more and more people are ready to accept. But why?

"A lot of the Seattle bands fall into that category of being alternative or indie bands, but these are bands who were influenced by a lot of '70s heavy rock," he explains. "And a lot of bands are heavy rock bands, but the marketing makes them look otherwise.

"With the whole Sub-Pop thing, the guy who runs that seems to take a heavy rock band and make them seem like they're cool and alternative through marketing. It isn't necessarily that the bands are like that, but Sub-Pop seem to have re-invented people's perceptions of what's cool to like because of the image. A kind of music that wouldn't have seemed cool for certain people now is."

McGinley firmly believes that this kind of attitude is now far more prevalent in the UK.

"The whole pigeon-holing kind of thing was particularly British," he ponders. "In America it's not so much a big deal. It's difficult to generalize, but I think people are more open to different kinds of music. When you look at some of the coolest people in America, bands like Sonic Youth or Dinosaur Jr., and you actually meet these people they like everything. They don't try to be cool, they just like anything, whereas some of their fans in this country will be selective to try to be cool."

"Bandwagonesque", depsite adhering to classic pop song formulae on most of its song construction, supplies a sound pleasing to most hardened rock ears. It's an album that could sit quite happily between Nirvana and Led Zeppelin in anyone's collection.

"Talking about the mix of hard rock and the indie thing, I remember when "Never Mind The Bollocks" came out," recalls the guitarist. "I was about 11 or 12 at the time and all the people who bought it were guys into hard rock music. The Sex Pistols made a great, well-produced rock record and then it was marketed as being something that was cool. You know, the punk thing and the fact that they couldn't play and all that.

"They could play," he insists. "The guitar playing on that album is great, and it's a really well produced album, but people believe the hype! After that they made crap punk records, because they believed in what people thought the Sex Pistols were all about."

Was there any surprise that a rock magazine wanted to talk to a band more used to being hailed as the next big thing in the weeklies?

"I don't really know."

He seems genuinely stumped.

"I kind of prefer doing this kind of thing than the idea of a magazine that thinks they know all about you," he continues. "That kind of *Yeah, you're one of us!* thing. I feel as much affinity to hard rock as a genre as I do to indie or alternative music. There are things in it that I like and things that I think are terrible. None of us would ever go for the whole package."

Another package the Fanclub were reluctant to get involved with was signing to a major British label. Despite a six-album deal with Geffen in the States, it's that epitome of all things hip, Creation Records, who are home to Teenage Fanclub in the UK.

"The reason we went for an indie like Creation in Britain is because I think the majors in this country just don't have a clue," he snorts. "They seem really amateurish. If you ever meet any British A&R man they're like ten years behind anything. They don't have any kind of vision or ideas to develop a band. Creation make albums like the My Bloody Valentine record, which they spend loads of money on, not to be a massive hit, but as a catalogue record. They're always gonna have it, and it'll be selling copies in 20 years' time. That's their attitude towards bands."

After what must amount to yet another successful year in the Teenage Fanclub calendar, the band are set to enter the studio to begging work on their next album, which should, according to McGinley, see the light of day early next year on Creation Records.

Maybe this is one fan club you should seriously think about joining.

Teenage Fanclub's last album "Bandwagonesque" is still available through Creation Records

SHONEN KNIFE (L-R): NAOKO, ATSUKO and MICHIE

EUGENE SCRIBES dons kimono and catches up with Japanese pop sensations SHONEN KNIFE

KNIFE PEOPLE

Christ, I mean, just what do you say to three delightfully appealing, tiny Japanese girls whose life seems to revolve around sweets and small furry animals and whom you feel compelled to wrap up in cotton wool (for safe keeping, mind you!) when you're here to talk about rawk and roll?

Shonen Knife appear timidly out of the lift in the foyer of London's Embassy Hotel and gaze around for whoever it is that has turned up to interview them. It is me, and contact is soon made. They barely reach my waist! Immediately you feel like you're supposed to be looking after them. With their manager and sometime translator (the girls' conversational English is OK) upstairs in the bath, Naoko (vocals/guitar), Atsuko (vocals/drums) and Michie (vocals/bass) are left to fend for themselves and you feel sorry for them.

We locate an empty table in the bar, but no beer will pass anyone's lips today. All three smile and nod, and politely await the first question. For once I am stumped. Just what do I ask them? *Shonen Knife are a contrived marketing ploy being sold on the back of three cutesy Japanese girls aren't they?* springs to mind, but the thought of them bursting into tears at such a horrible accusation pushes it back from whence it came.

So I opt for the far more banal, but presentable *Did you enjoy Reading Festival?*

"Oh ya!" they all grin and nod.

"There were more than five thousand people in our tent, and it was the biggest audience we've ever had," continues Michie.

"Many people throw jelly babies at us when I sing "Flying Jelly Attack"," adds Naoko.

For those who don't know, and quite how you could have missed them in the post-Reading euphoria of their winning performance in the session tent, Shonen Knife are Japan's latest, and biggest, pop/rock sensation. Fortunately eschewing the crap (or should that be *clap!*) metal values of the likes of Loudness or Vow Wow, this trio of Mary Quant dresses, sweeter-than-sweet smiles and even sweeter tastebuds opt for a different slant altogether.

Ten years old (as a band!) and four albums down the line, "Let's Knife" (out on Creation) is Britain's introduction (discounting last year's "Space Christmas" single) to a band who rock like the Ramones and Dinosaur Jr. and look like an Eastern Ronettes. Already championed by Nirvana, and the majority of America's hip underground bands (who banded together for a compilation "Everybody's Got A Shonen Knife That Loves Them"), here are a band who delight in singing about animals in the zoo ("Bear Up Bison"), barbie dolls ("Twist Barbie") and the desire to be a small furry animal ("I Am A Cat") and love sweets in abundance. Not your normal, run-of-the-mill fare.

But then Shonen Knife aren't your normal, run-of-the-mill band.

"I think European people not knowing about us are very curious," answers Michie, when quizzed on what it's like to be under the harsh media spotlight.

They confer quietly and politely behind hands.

"I think people have no understand about Japanese life and think we live old life," states Naoko. "We are telling them that real life in Japan is to enjoy music and stuff. So many people have wrong idea about Japan."

Do they find it weird that they've only begun to get worldwide recognition after ten years?

More conferring, followed by an embarrassed "Pardon?"

A re-worded question is understood.

"I don't know why, but I think that Shonen Knife time has come," giggles Michie. "The strain of rock music has changed in ten years. For instance Nirvana (pronounced *Near-vana* today) became very big rock star, but more than two or three years ago Nirvana is kind of cult band. Band in hit chart not like Nirvana. More pop or heavy metal, so I think the stream of rock has changed."

Are they worried that all this attention means that Shonen Knife are just the 'next big thing'. That they might become a flash-in-the-pan?

"We done lots of things and not so many people have noticed us for long time. We'd like to have lots of chance to play our music in front of lots of people. We want them to listen to us if we have the chance. Now the economic situation in world is very bad. Many people have no jobs and price of things has many inflations. Such a situation make many good bands. I have not so many favourite bands in '80s, I like '60s or '70s bands. At end of '70s the economics situation very similar to now. There are many punk, new wave bands born, and also now I have many favourite bands like Nirvana, Dinosaur Jr., Sonic Youth so if Shonen Knife be like them I am very happy."

How did the much mentioned Nirvana patronage come about?

"Nirvana has liked us for three years and last year when we did a show in Los Angeles they came to see us, but they say they are too shy to come up to our backstage," recalls Michie. "They needed a front band (support act) for England tour and they contacted us. We didn't know them so well so we went to get "Nevermind" CD and look at picture and think *Wow, these guys look very wild!* but when we meet they are very kind to us and treat us very well."

Was it strange to tour with a rock act like Nirvana?

"It was just after single ("Smells Like Teen Spirit") became a hit and we didn't know they were so huge," laughs Michie.

"But now they are very famous like Guns n' Roses," giggles Naoko. "We didn't think it was something special."

"Now in Japan people who are liking Guns n' Roses are liking Nirvana," reveals Michie. "I think it a very strange phenomenon."

And are these people also liking Shonen Knife?

"We hope so," they all laugh.

Although Shonen Knife don't actually look like your average rock band, do they?

"Actually Naoko recently wrote a very heavy song," claims Michie. "And also on "Let's Knife" "Antonio Baka Guy" is a very hard song, like Motörhead. We once thought of wearing heavy metal clothes, but we had to stop that idea because we are so short."

They all burst into a fit of giggles, dropping their guard and revealing a devilish sense of humour. Before I can stop myself I've counteracted. Come on, Shonen Knife are a contrived marketing ploy being sold on the back of three cutesy Japanese girls, aren't they?

They stare agog! Oh no, what have I done. Please don't cry!

"We want to play music. We want to be happy. We want people to enjoy our music," counters Michie, all wide-eyed innocence. I believe her. I feel like crying.

Normality is restored. We finish the interview and off they go, bowing in a huddled little group. They look like the unlikeliest rock stars in the world. They sing about the strangest things. "Let's Knife" proves a hard edge to their candy-coated exterior. They are the absolute queens of pop.

Shonen Knife's British debut "Let's Knife" is currently available through Creation Records

INSPIRAL CARPETS latest album, "Revenge Of The Goldfish", sees them moving even further into rock territory. JERRY EWING investigates

CARPET BU

"*The least appealing of all the Madchester-era bands, the Inspiral Carpets were an unwelcome '60s throwback*" sniped a recent inkie obit. of Manchester's ultimate rise and fall as top style city in pop's great scheme of things. Not fair, but it shows what happens when you don't run with the in-crowd!

Equally unfair is the idea that any band to have sprung from Manchester's urban confines within the last five years has been nothing other than your typical E-popping, crack rocking Happy Mondays style indie-dance troupe, as many of you are thinking right now. The Inspiral Carpets are from Oldham, anyway!

OK, so Manchester, or Oldham for that matter, may not have unleashed the barrage of quality rock cats in the same manner as, say, Birmingham (well, AIIZ isn't exactly the sort of name you drop in a pub these days is it?), but not every band lost its mind in an ecstacy haze and raved on regardless. Fellow Mancunians James had the feared mantle of 'stadium rock' hoisted upon their collective heads by a fearful media when "Sit Down" broke through. Morrisey, twat though he may be, flirted with glam rock and skinheads. And Inspiral Carpets released "Revenge Of The Goldfish".

Those of you unfamiliar with the works of Messrs. Hingley, Boon, Gill, Lambert and Walsh, and dismissing with a snort their hectic retro rock style as *more indie-pop crap!* should take a step back! Drag an ear across 1990's "Life" and you'll hear the kind of jangly guitar pop that everyone loves The Stone Roses for. Weave your way through the unfairly lamented "The Beast Inside" and you'll discover glorious progressive pop rock fuelled by Clint Boon's (he of best pudding bowl hair-do since Tucker from *Grange Hill*) swirling farfisa organ. And lend an ear to 1992's much harder hitting "Revenge Of The Goldfish" (one of the year's better releases) and realize that Inspiral Carpets have evolved into the band they always threatened to become. As removed from 'Madchester' as the new Zeppelin-esque (apparantly) Stone Roses album promises to be, they have at last struck out as an individual British rock band no longer prepared to be stuck in a rut by the music press.

Thus, with the advent of this harder-edged Inspiral Carpets come sniffing the bloodhounds of the harder rock press in the UK, eager to find out what the fuss is all about. Not that the Inspiral Carpets seem particularly phased by this long-haired intrusion. Vocalist Tom Hingley makes polite but inquisitive enquiries as to exactly what the 'rock' press want to know about Inspiral Carpets, voices his approval, and will later reveal an alarming knowledge of Blue Öyster Cult!

Seated in the nearest curry house, all three (that's Hingley, bassist Martyn Walsh and drummer Craig Gill) make their first concession to the world of heavy metal!

"I guess it's loads of lager then," bellows bass player Martyn Walsh, whilst the other two nod in agreement and the table bursts forth with peels of laughter.

Anyone witnessing the band's recent Brixton Academy extravaganza would not only have been impressed by their live rock-out, but also the across-the-board nature of the audience. A pre-gig tape crammed with Pearl Jam, Led Zeppelin and the Red Hot Chili Peppers may have had the baggy-brigade scratching their heads, but the Inspirals were having a good old giggle backstage and there were more than enough obvious rock fans in attendance to understand what was going on.

"I'm honoured to think we can cross over to a rock audience," offers Gill when the commotion dies down. "It's what we've always tried to do."

But let's make it clear that we're not trying to make the band out to be heavy metal band.

"No, no, no," they all cry. "Of course not".

"We're just a band, like Craig says, and we haven't got any real barriers to what we do," announces Hingley. "We've had all sorts of different people in our audiences ever since we started."

"I just find that a lot of people can realize that there's a lot more elements to our music other than being indie-dance, which we never were in the first place," points out Gill.

"It's quite interesting doing this interview," muses Walsh. "I find it funny because I hate being labelled, and everything I listen to I take in as an influence. With heavy metal, I can understand the music, and its cultishness. I don't understand the fans, and why they all have to have long hair, but I can understand people just wanting to hear loud guitars and stuff. Like I say we've always taken in every influence, and for us to get labelled is very annoying. It's good to see the barriers coming down."

"Well, the whole Manchester scene gave us a platform, but we were definitely one of the bands who were involved in the beginning of that scene," admits Hingley. "Of the bands that came out, we were there with Happy Mondays and The Stone Roses, and I can't really comment on the bands that have sprung up since 1989.

"We did benefit from all that media exposure, but I'd say we led a lot the exposure and subsequently tried to distance ourselves from it. We're not at all bothered that things have passed by, because they can now be judged for what they are."

Whilst the days of Madchester now seem to be drifting off into the distance, the image of the fans remains. And along with it the narrow-mindedness that one once thought only allied itself to the heavy metal fan.

"One of the greatest records of last year was Anthrax and Public Enemy ("Bring The Noise")," points out Gill. "That wasn't just musical opposites but racial opposites. That really said *Bollocks* to a lot of people and showed that kind of thing could be done. Whatever you're into, you've got to see something in that record."

Several years ago, many people would have deemed it ridiculous that the likes of Nirvana, Mudhoney, L7 and The Rollins Band could all appear on the same festival bill as, say, The Wonder Stuff, Public Enemy, The Charlatans, Ride and The Farm, as happened this year at The Reading Festival.

"I find it weird that people have barriers in music," agrees Walsh. "It's all so young and childish, that attitude of having to be in a 'scene'. That's why we've always been against 'scenes'. The Manchester thing was good because it gave us exposure, but we always wanted to be at the back of it, to stand aside and say we're about more than that!"

"You mentioned Reading, and I think you can say the same about Glastonbury," muses Hingley. "I didn't go this year, but I think it's quite important because it's bringing together a whole different range of music and culture."

Now whilst no-one would call the Inspirals a heavy rock act, "Revenge Of The Goldfish" displays a noticeable hardening of their approach. Graham Lambert's guitars scream all over tracks like "Generations", "Saviour" and "Fire", and whilst something like "Dragging Me Down" is nothing but a delicious slice of melodic pop, in places they are nothing other than hard rock!

"We were always called rock, but it was more rock without the guitar solos and drum solos," smiles Gill.

"Take a classic rock track like, say, "In-A-Gadda-Da-Vida" (Iron Butterfly). It's a band with keyboards blending with guitar," muses Hingley. "I think we've always had the guitar and keyboards in our music, but on this album it's really come out."

"It's gonna look like you're desperate to impress," laughs Gill. "A couple of years ago everyone was going *Oh, there's always been a dance element to our music.* This year the press quote's going to be *There's always been a guitar element to our music.*

"A lot of people said we had this dance element, which was why we released "The Beast Inside" (described by some pop pundits as a - Gosh! Shock! Horror - progressive rock album!). It was a bit extreme, but it was basically saying we weren't really a dance band, even though there's a small element in the drums and bass. It was just a reaction really. We were just so tired of being labelled in with the indie-dance thing."

"I think our music's basically

INSPIRAL CARPETS (L-R): CLINT BOON, MARTYN WALSH, TOM HINGLEY, CRAIG GILL and GRAHAM LAMBERT

Pic Nick Matthews

RNS

accessible to everyone really," declares Tom. "There's this very physical, hard element to our music that maybe didn't really come across on the last album, but certainly comes across on this one."

"Nirvana have brought the guitar back in fashion," states Walsh. "Rightly or wrongly, I immediately feel wary when people claim nowadays to be guitar-orientated, but I can think I can stand by the whole thing, from the very first time I saw Inspiral Carpets, there were always guitars there. It was always rock'n'roll, just with a different style."

"I guess at the end of the day, a lot of heavy metal fans would like our music if our image was different," Martyn points out.

"I think it's entirely good that people who like heavy rock music should get into us, or Primal Scream or anyone, because it's just breaking down barriers," adds Hingley. "There's a lot of very intense, heavy music they'd enjoy which they'd never encounter. I think a lot of heavy metal fans would like My Bloody Valentine, because that exemplifies the record you never play to your mates if you're a heavy metal fan. You've got it in your collection, but you never drag it out in front of your mates, because you wouldn't want to admit to owning it.

"If I went to a club and heard one of our tracks followed by something like Anthrax or Prong, then I'd be much more impressed than if I heard half-an-hour of boring hardcore dance."

"People can slag off Manchester," starts Gill, "but at one point, at the Hacienda on a Thursday night, it was the closest you'd come to seeing a rave crowd dancing to Dinosaur Jr. It only happened for a few months, but it happened. It won't happen now, because that was the start of it. They've become elitist now, just like everyone else. It was people taking E and becoming open-minded. Now they're just into hardcore and all that garage shit. The Hacienda's empty now on a Thursday, because people are embarrassed to say they're into guitars. It was never supposed to be about that!"

"It's all to do with how people look," moans Hingley. "That's got to be done away with, how much hairspray someone's wearing. If that's the only thing that matters then it's wrong. And if the business stays too much with that, then it's gonna go bust, because it's not what drives music on."

Gill is equally contemptuous of the E scene that spawned the Madchester kids.

"The whole E scene annoys me now. It was a really creative thing at the time, when we were doing the big rave gigs at G-Mex. If people who'd been to a rave and then came to one of our concerts, took some E and then had the same feeling as being at a big rave, then that was really creative. Now it's a lot of people getting so off their head they're saying they only like rave music. Not any particular track, just the music. To me they've become numbed and non-creative!"

Numbed and non-creative! Two adjectives not about to hang themselves around the neck of Inspiral Carpets. With "Revenge Of The Goldfish", here's one Manchester band staking their own claim for an independent right to be remembered in Britain's rock history. The age of baggy may be over, but the age of Inspiral Carpets is just beginning.

"I reckon," adds Gill eagerly, "that we deserve to be on MTV's *Headbangers Ball* more than Mr. Big, or Thunder or Poison. Because we embody more of the spirit of bands like Anthrax and Metallica than they do. We embody being able to get up there with a guitar as much as anybody else."

"Revenge Of The Goldfish" is available through Mute Records

Rubicon

SUPPLEMENT
MF
POSTER

Pic Shelly Mitchell

BEATING THE BOOTERS!

NIRVANA
Incesticide
(Geffen - 24504)

★★★

Everybody's fave asylum fodder. What will Kurt Cobain do next? Will he even survive to make his bacon & eggs at breakfast? Wow! No, I am not a huge fan of Nirvana. Nor, though, do I detest 'em. To my way of thinking, they are a fairly talented rock act who got a lucky break. Nothing wrong in that. And good luck to 'em. Ride that gravy train, boys. Just make sure you've got that return ticket tucked into a pocket, OK?

None of which has anything *really* to do with this album. Just thought I'd get it off my chest. So, "Incesticide". Contains 15 tracks put out *In an effort to combat bootleggers who are currently cashing in on the band's success.* Apparently. Oh, so they're doing everyone a favour. *Now* I understand! Silly me, and I thought it was an attempt by the band to cash in themselves.

Anyway, is it any good? Well, not at all bad. Drawing from singles on Sub Pop, a BBC Radio One session, demos, unreleased tracks, it is indeed a mish-mash. Yet, musically it does show that this band have talent, albeit occasionally misdirected and aimless. It opens with "Dive" and "Sliver" (the B and A side, respectively, of an '88 Sub Pop single), which immediately display a penchant for hammering out tuneful yet fiercely competitive songs. Another Sub Pop B side, "Stain", is equally as effective.

However, it's when one enters the realms of BBC radio sessions for John Peel ("Turnaround", "Molly's Lips", "Son Of A Gun"; the first is a Devo cover, the others versions of Vaseline songs) and Mark Goodier ("Been A Son", "(New Wave) Polly" and "Aneurysm") that the first signs of depletion are heard. None of these performances are that strong. Better by far are "Beeswax" (from the "Kill Rock Stars" compilation - manic), "Downer" (taken from the "Bleach" sessions - raw) and "Mexican Seafood" (from the "Teriyaki Asthma" compilation - quirky).

However, the real nadir is reached with the original demo versions of "Hairspray Queen" and "Aero Zeppelin" and "Big Long Now", an outtake from the "Bleach" album sessions. All three are utter crap, complete drivel and of interest only to those who are absolute Nirvana fanatics and feel driven to collect anything associated with the band. But then, these people probably own this stuff already!

"Incesticide" is a flawed project, musically and conceptually. It shows up Nirvana as a talented band who have made some bad mistakes, some of which work and others...

MALCOLM DOME

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albums

DIE KRUPPS
A Tribute To Metallica
(Our Choice - RTD 195.1240.2)

★★★★

Let's broaden our minds, shall we?

After all, an album of hardcoretechnoindustrialmetalelectronic (and just try saying that after a pint or two!) re-workings of classic Metallica songs is hardly going to fare well with Harry Headbanger, is it? But that's what German four-piece Die Krupps have done, with impressive results.

We get their renditions of "Enter Sandman", "Nothing Else Matters", "Blackened", "Battery" and "For Whom The Bell Tolls", replete with industrial vocals, plenty of samples and bizarro noises - and blow me if it isn't one of the best things I've heard in years!

Jürgen Engler adds an even more haunting menace to Hetfield's dark original's with his sparse Germanic tones, Bjorn Lucker actually drums in time whilst ex-Propaganda (check out their debut album, if you get the chance!) man Ralf Dorper adds the sugar, spice and all things nice to make the whole thing work in a totally effective way.

Of course Die Krupps are no strangers to metal or Metallica. Earlier this year they released an EP, "Metal Machine Music", along with German thrashers Accuser, and they included a cover of "One" on their "I" album, and they remain as faithful as their chosen field allows.

The essence of each song comes through, both "Blackened" and "Battery" being particularly forceful, whilst the gentleness of "Nothing Else Matters" is particularly surprising, given both Metallica's and Die Krupps' own built-in intensity.

Depsite the patronage of Lars Ulrich, I'd wager some of you will be disgusted. Personally, I'd have liked to see the band do with Metallica what Laibach did with the Beatles' "Let It Be" album, but we can't have our cake and eat it too.

Whatever, be warned! The likes of EMF or Jesus Jones have only really scratched the surface of rock music blended with techno. Die Krupps take it down to a much darker more intense, but ultimately enjoyable level.

JERRY EWING

MARTY FRIEDMAN
Scenes
(Roadrunner - RR 9104-2)

★★

There is one thing I hate about Marty Friedman - besides his Kevin Keegan perm - and that is his theological approach to the guitar. Honestly, this man works out guitar parts from other instruments. Give him Mozart's 41st and he'll turn it into a guitar orgy! A guitar should be played with feeling, it's not a text book!

This record is full of the text book niceties guitarists could yap on about all night, and lacks some of the feeling a natural player has. "Tibet" somehow reminds me more of the Scottish highlands than its mysterious Asian namesake. Marty does, however, make this a passionate affair, dropping between tender melodies and soft punches. Light and shade, you might say.

The synths on "Valley Of Eternity" add some much needed support, though if the budget had allowed, I'd have preferred to hear a real, full-scale live orchestra.

The light, staccato notes give "Realm Of The Senses" an oriental feel, but there are plenty of rock-orientated solo passages to remind you that Friedman still has at least one foot in the Megadeth door. I must warn you, though, not to expect anything even close to his hardened work on "Symphony Of Destruction".

Both "Triumph" and "Trance" seem to close "Scenes" on a less than thrilling note, repeating the exercises of the earlier numbers. I hope Mr. Friedman hasn't considered playing any of this at Megadeth's shows, not that Mustaine would let him!

Technically perfect though this album is, Marty's desire to create an entirely different entity to Megadeth has overshadowed his ability to make great records. Much of "Scenes" sounds like a movie soundtrack. It lacks the dynamic changes of the rough with the smooth, the versatility of having a free agenda. Let's hope that former Testament guitarist Alex Skolnick has something better in store for us, because Marty's thrashbrat crown has slipped.

CHERYL SMITH

FOREIGNER
The Very Best And Beyond
(Atlantic - 7567-89999-2)

★★★★

LOU GRAMM: BACK ROCKING

This may be almost an exact replica of "Foreigner's Greatest Hits" which came out earlier this year, but it also features three brand spanking new tracks from the current Lou Gram-fronted line-up, and for that alone it needs to be checked out.

Of course, hardly anyone gives a damn about Foreigner anymore, but they were up there with the best of them in their heyday, believe you me. As with all AOR bands they pandered to bland excesses, crass ballads and ultimately lost any respect due to them.

So it's interesting to note that on opening cut, "Soul Doctor", they really come out fighting. It is without a doubt one of the heaviest things the band have ever recorded, a fiery rocker that suggests they still may be able to wipe the floor with Extreme, Hardline, Slaughter, Thunder and the rest of today's mainstream rockers.

Lou Gramm possesses a voice sent directly from heaven itself; let loose on something as heavy as this he sounds happier than he's ever done, whilst Mick Jones peals off some solidly metallic riffs. Check it out, you'll be surprised.

"Prisoner Of Love", another rocker, opts for a less intense delivery but still knocks the opposition for six, whilst "With Heaven On Our Side" is the obligatory ballad required to keep Atlantic happy. OK if you like that sort of thing, but hardly likely to do an ageing AOR act many favours with the punters!

The rest is a cursory run-through Foreigner's best moments of the past: "Juke Box Hero", "Cold As Ice", "Dirty White Boy", "Head Games", "Feels Like The First Time", etc...Along with the mega ballads "Waiting For A Girl Like You" and "I Want To Know What Love Is".

Given record company disinterest in both Gramm's Shadow King project and the Johnny Edwards-fronted Foreigner (who spawned the "Unusual Heat" album), it was only a matter of time before Jones and Gramm healed the rift that split the band in 1990. That Atlantic have released this with the three new tracks suggests they're testing the water for a possible new Foreigner album before committing themselves.

Given the current musical mood at the moment, however, this may be the last you hear from the band, at least on the Atlantic label.

JERRY EWING

EYEHATEGOD
In The Name Of Suffering
(Century Media - 77-9738-2)

★★★★

This isn't a pretty album, in concept, design, construction or execution. This is as raw as one will find in a godless society. Savage, cannibalistic, ballistic. It has a raging intensity many will find unpalatable, gruesome. But there is no denying either this quintet's power or their instinct. In short, Eyehategod are a monster out of control on a cocktail of angel dust, crack, vodka, bourbon, snake venom, Slayer, Manson, Dahmer, Carcass, Black Sabbath *(real* Sabbath, circa '72), Venom, MC5 and Throbbing Gristle.

You get the idea. This is nasty. Bare wires metaphorically inserted in sensitive skin. Nerve endings deliberately cauterised. Guitars (from Marc and Jimmy) that rip into your brain rather like a blunt machete wielded by a lobotomised hooligan. Rhythms from bassist Steve and drummer Joey that have all the delicacy of acid rain at a flower show. Vocals from Mike that emanate from bowel level, mixing faecal intonations with mescaline. Yes indeed, this is one monster that doesn't play dead.

The songs are all about as cuddly as a nest of tarantulas on heroin drip feeds. "Man Is Too Ignorant To Exist", "Pigs", "Run It Into The Ground", "Left To Starve", "Hostility Dose". This is gospel music on death row. These are hymns for the gutter and the gut. These are the maniacal outpourings of depraved minds. Mortuary humour, cesspit politics.

Dirty, degrading, diabolic. Eyehategod are an awesome implosion of metallic ire. Not for the squeamish.

MALCOLM DOME

NINE INCH NAILS
Fixed
(Island ILP3005/ICM8005)

★★★

If the tormented world of Nine Inch Nails' main inspiration Trent Reznor was not dark enough, this remixed working of the "Broken" mini-album (hence "Fixed") offers a far bleaker landscape.

The bludgeoning noiseniks unleash waves of white noise, buzzsaw guitar all decomposing into a bastardised techno blur of the most intense variety. The resulting cacophony bares little resemblance to "Broken"- it has more in common with those pioneers of *blip blip* dance music A Certain Ratio in places - but Reznor's sense of the perverse is still writ large over "Happiness In Slavery" and "Fist Fuck", while "Screaming Slave" clocks in at a mind-numbing eight minutes of frenzied haze.

Apparantly, some US troops involved in Operation Desert Storm chose Nine Inch Nails as their personal soundtrack to the conflict, roaming the desert in the Humvees blasting the stuff out their stereos. Doubtless, had they been fighting to "Fixed" they could have gone all the way to Baghdad.

ANDY MARTIN

VARIOUS
Mesomorph Enduros
(Big Cat - ABB36CD)

★★★

Interesting idea, this. A compilation featuring 15 of America's best underground band, brought together by the enterprising Jim 'Foetus' Thirwell. And it is an amalgamation that works quite well. Of course, not all of the bands or tracks are essential, but there is enough quality here to make the whole project worthwhile.

Opening up with the excellent Cop Shoot Cop and the haunting "Room 429" (previously unreleased), the album maintains a high level via The Melvins and "Vile", pure heavy manna from the "Ozma" album. The Jesus Lizard ("Nub") and Hammerhead ("Louse") provide reasonable doses of hostility, before the standard is raised again by Helios Creed and their guitar overfeed on "Sister Sarah". Tad then envelope the speakers with the muddied yet undeniable charms of "Pig Iron".

Foetus inevitably provide one of the albums's high spots via the magnetic flux of "Incesticide" (dirty, vicious, forbidding). And Thinking Fellers Union Local 282 literally disintegrate the usual concepts of dynamics and sound balance with "Nothing Solid", a real sado-masochistic masterpiece. Laughing Hyenas sadly cannot follow the previous pairing, although "Candy" does satisfyingly glow with venom. And Drunk Tank ("Hog Ditch"), Pain Teens ("Hands In Fire") and Of Cabbages And Kings ("The Reign") all perform creditably with variations on the grunge/industrial theme.

Finally, there is the trio of Bark Market ("Johnny Shiv" - jangling guitars and blood-spurting vocals), Unsane ("Bath" - serial killer performance) and Motherhead Bug ("Blister" - reminiscent of Celtic frost at their most adventurous during the "Into The Pandemonium" era).

MALCOLM DOME

THE WILDHEARTS
Don't Be Happy...Just Worry
(East/West - 4509-91202-2)

★★★★

Warning, the back cover says, *Life has teeth*. The Wildhearts' wisdom is quite correct - life does indeed have a sharp bite. Mind you, The Wildhearts aren't so tame themselves. At one Liverpool gig I attended, guitarist/vocalist Ginger was hard enough to pick a fight with a heckler from the assembled audience.

This double CD consists of the repackaged "Mondo Akimbo A-Go-Go" EP, plus four new cuts. Those of you who regularly visit your local booze'n'boogie tent (ie. rock club) will already be familiar with the 'Hearts anti-social behaviour in "Turning American". Gnawing hooklines, gritty guitars, thumping rhythms. On CD it sounds more coherent, so it's a shame that Ginger's vocals are so low in the mix.

For all their historical connections with the Quireboys (Ginger) and the Dogs D'Amour (drummer Bam Bam), the Wildhearts bear little resemblance to their past glories. Perhaps only "Nothing Ever Changes But The Shoes" is reminiscent of the Dogs. No, these eight titles share more with The Almighty, or Wolfsbane. Maybe The Wildhearts could muster up more overseas support than their UK comrades by hooking up to the tail end of the grunge hip trip that's so popular at the moment. Whatever, the 'Hearts look like having a longer lifespan tahn any dumb trend.

"Splattermania" looks making the future a rosy one, like D★A★D without the AC/DC overtones. Generally speaking, Robert Musso has made a neater job of the production than Don Priest did with "Mondo Akimbo...". There's more clarity with "Weekend (Five Long Days)" than in anything that's come before. For a change in pace there's always "Dreaming In A", mid-tempo yet never awkwardly dull.

If you didn't care for the live shows, don't worry - neither did I."Dont Be Happy..." is inexcusible fun, magic even. Life certainly does have teeth. One spin and The Wildhearts will bite you too.

CHERYL SMITH

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LOOP
Fade Out
(Reactor - REACTORLP4)

★★★★

Dual
(Reactor - REACTORLP5)

★★★★

Two re-releases from one of the early shoegazing/grunge protagonists now sadly not with us (the band disbanded into Main and The Hair And Skin Trading Company). These two albums will keep happy those saddened by the loss and should definitely be checked out by even the slightly curious.

"Fade Out" epitomises the much copied Loop sound of repetitive rhythms, fuzzy bass and guitars, and swirling psychedlic harmonies as evinced on "Black Sun" and "This Is Where You End". Both "Pulse" and "A Vision Stain" offer some wonderfullu disinterested vocals blending in with some fine swirling guitar work, whilst "Fever Knife" is a darker, slower story altogether. It's a great, hard driving yet surprisingly melodic affair that will appeal to anyone whose tastes run to the grungier things in life.

"Dual" comprises both the "Black Sun" and "Collision" EPs, the former displaying some heavy Pink Floyd/Hawkwind style influences on the warped and spaced-out rock of "Circle Grave" and "Mother Sky", whilst the latter features some plain grungy metal on "Collision", gets weird on "Thief (Motherfucker)" and delves into some intense psychedelic grunge on "Thief Of Fire".

That Loop are not with us adds to the irony of the success due both these releases. A band before their time? Perhaps, but in today's musical climate, both "Fade Out" and "Dual" will undoubtedly go down a treat!

JERRY EWING

ANTHRAX
Among The Living/
Persistence Of Time
(Island - ITSCD 6 514 293-2)

★★★

Island Records have come up with a brainwave. Twinsets. Re-packaging of two CDs from a band at a reasonable price. In these recession-hit times a master move. And so to Anthrax...

Now signed to Elektra, this set takes us back through two of their celebrated albums with Joey Belladonna handling the vocals. And there are some real gems in this 20-track collection. From 1986 comes the Eddie Kramer-produced "Among The Living", arguably their finest album to date. Check out the title track, "Caught In A Mosh", "I Am The Law", "Efilnikufesin (N.F.L.)", "Indians" and "One World". Titles familiar to all Anthrax fans and among the true classics of the thrash genre. Even at this distance of some seven years, the record stands up to scrutiny.

Which is more than can be said for "Persistence Of Time" from 1990 (produced by Mark Dodson). I always felt that this album let the the band down badly. It seemed to lose its way between all-out punch and unacceptable sophistication. Sure, "Keep It In The Family" and the cover of Joe Jackson's "Got The Time" worked well enough, but the rest seemed to be confused and confusing. And practically three years on, "Persistence..." hasn't worn well. At all.

Overall, a good set. Perhaps a few notes to explain the backgrounds to these albums should have been included. And exactly why Island have gone for this pairing I'm none too sure. But this is a budget series, and I shouldn't complain too much.

MALCOLM DOME

FREE
Fire And Water/Heartbreaker
(Island - ITSCD 3 514 288-2)

★★★★

Another in Island's recently-released Twinset series, this Free offering couples their best known albums, "Heartbreaker" and "Fire And Water", which, somewhat unsurprisingly, feature the band's best-known songs, "All Right Now" and "Wishing Well".

It's interesting to note how Free's approach to making music - scant regard for contemporary hits, just honest, earthy, bluesy workouts, has been adopted by some of today's hipper rock acts, most notably Temple Of The Dog and Pearl Jam, ironically making these two albums sound less dated today than they may have done five years ago!

You can't fault the delivery on both albums, and many opt for "Fire And Water" as being the definitive set, featuring the classic Paul Rodgers/Simon Kirke/Paul Kossoff/Andy Fraser line-up. The title track is a spartanly haunting affair, with Paul Rodgers excelling himself, and both the cracking "Mr. Big" and the well-known riff of "All Right Now" back it up superbly. The little-heard "Oh I Wept" and "Heavy Load" provide mellow slices of delight.

"Heartbreaker" came out two years later, in 1972, by which time Kossoff's heroin addiction had seen him become a part-time band member (he would overdose in 1976) and Andy Fraser had quit (replaced by Tetsu Yamauchi). Still, "Wishing Well" is a hard rock standard (and, thankfully, not flogged to death like "All Right Now"), backed up with the gospel-tinged "Come Together In The Morning", the easy "Travellin' In Style" and the colossal title track. It remains my favourite Free album.

One of the best British rock acts of the early '70s, they went on to spawn Bad Company, but they never regained the complete class of these two classic releases.

This is thoroughly recommended stuff.

JERRY EWING

HÜSKER DÜ/ WAREHOUSE
Songs And Stories
(Warner Bros - 7599-25544-2)

★★★

HÜSKER DÜ
Candy Apple Grey
(Warner Bros - 7599-25385-2)

★★★★

Hüsker Dü were the awesome Boston three-piece of which Sugar guitarist Bob Mould was a pivotal member. Hardly surprising, then, that the man's characteristic imploring vocals and buzz-saw guitar style are clearly in evidence throughout the 30 songs contained on these two albums. The raucous power-trio won a cult following among indie fans in the late '80s, the consensus putting "Candy Apple Grey" marginally ahead on points.

That is not to say "Songs And Stories" is without its moments. "Standing In The Rain", for instance, displays Mould's tinny guitar sound and frenetic playing style, which was further expanded on his two subsequent solo outings, the mighty "Wörkbook" and the underrated "Black Rain".

The awesome power of Hüsker Dü renewed faith in the power-trio as a workable rock format and in their intense, yet melodic delivery; it's clear where the likes of Nirvana have looked for inspiration. If Sugar was to your taste, then these timely re-issues should prove just as sweet.

ANDY MARTIN

MINISTRY
The Land Of Rape And Honey
(Sire - 9 25799-2)

★★★

The Mind Is A Terrible Thing To Taste
(Sire - 9 26004-2)

★★★1/2

In Case You Didn't Feel Like Showing Up (Live)
(Sire - 7599-26266-2)

★★★★

Ministry. The band who have become to the industrial scene what Metallica are to thrash - hip, trendy and the name to drop when chatting to a neighbour in a public urinal after a heavy office party! The brain child of Al(ien) Jourgensen, Ministry started out as a sub-Wham! electro-disco mob, but soon switched into a heavier vein.

The '88 offering, "The Land Of Rape And Honey", matched Human League/Daniel Miller style electro-hypnotics with Jim Foetus/Throbbing Gristle mania and Motörhead guitar power. With undertones of middle eastern magic and gothic mystique, the overall effect was fascinating, if flawed. However, opener "Stigmata", "Hizbollah" and "Flashback" still disturb even now.

A year later, the intriguingly titled "The Mind Is A Terrible Thing To Taste" showed a more confident band striding further into the realms of Public Image Ltd (check out "Cannibal Song") and beginning to develop a more cogent range. The likes of "Burning Inside", "So What" and "Faith Collapsing" provide haunting, surreal musical passages as Jourgensen, bassist Paul Barker, drummer William Rieflin and vocalist Chris Connelly tear the veins out of the cadaverous concept of 'heaviness'.

In 1990 came "In Case You Didn't Feel Like Showing Up (Live)", which is still arguably Ministry's finest hour. Recorded on their '89/'90 US tour, this is a six-song deconstruction exercise that absorbs sounds and images, throwing 'em out as black shapes of paranoia and psychoses. If the studio versions of "The Missing", "Deity", "So What", "Burning Inside", "Thieves" and "Stigmata" were electric, then onstage they became terrifying animals of prey.

Unquestionably, this is where Ministry's legend first began to take shape, and even though the most recent album ("Psalm 69") is their best effort yet to come out of the studio, nonetheless "In Case..." is where they score most heavily. Any self-respecting fan of the band (and indeed the genre) should own this item.

MALCOLM DOME

THE STRANGLERS
The Old Testament
(EMI - CDS 7999242)

★★★★

These career-spanning boxed sets are all the rage these days, are they not? Indeed it's so, but few go the whole hog in the manner that "The Old Testament" does. Not only do you get every album that the band recorded for EMI (actually the now-defunct Liberty/United Artists label) - which in chronological order looks something like this; "Rattus Norvegicus", "No More Heroes", "Black & White", "The Raven", "The Gospel According To The Meninblack" and "La Folie" - but also singles, B-sides and CD-extra tracks. You know the sort of thing.

Born before, but benefitting greatly from, the New Wave boom, The Stranglers never really were, as many claimed at the tail end of the '70s, a punk band. Indeed take their first single "(Get A) Grip (On Yourself)", also from the debut album, and what have you got? An excellently dark, melodic rock song with a sophisticated saxophone break that was well before its time.

A combination of Dave Greenfield's swirling Doors-ian keyboards and J.J. Burnell's throbbing bass fuel almost all the tracks from the first four albums, highlights of which are still the big hits "No More Heroes", "Peaches", "Nice'N'Sleazy" and "Duchess", before the band went weirdo on the mysterious "...Meninblack" album, and scored the massively ironic pop hit with their heroin lament "Golden Brown".

"La Folie" - the haunting tale of cannibalistic love, sung totally in French by J.J., is perhaps the perfect example of the band's twisted yet delightful sense of humour, whilst "Strange Little Girl" is as beautiful a pop song as you'll hear. And this from the band who penned "I Feel Like A Wog"!

It doesn't matter that my favourite Stranglers album is "Aural Sculpture" from their CBS years, for this four-CD set, along with excellent 110-page book from Chris Twomey, revives fond memories and acts as a fascinating document.

They really were quite excellent, weren't they?

JERRY EWING

albums REVIEWS

BAD 4 GOOD
Refugee
(Interscope - 792185-2)

★★★★

This is the first time I've actually heard young whizzkid Thomas McRocklin. To be honest, I didn't believe the hype about him. But since I've heard this album, he's impressed me even way past the hype. First off, he's put a pre-pubescent band together, instead of a guitar god ego trip deal. Not only that, this is a damn fine band, regardless of age. For starters, main wailer Danny Cooksey reminds me of a far superior version of ex-Fastway/Katmandu man Dave King, and bassist Zach Young plus drummer Brooks Wackerman would give their mentors a run their money!

Songwise is where the real crunch comes, and whilst there are some damn fine ones, there are also those that fall into the category of the mediocre. A cover of Phil Lynott's "Nineteen" sees vocalist Cooksey coming on with a surprising amount of aggression. It's a pacey rocker which is the band's first video/single. Other highpoints include "Bangin' Time Again", the semi-balladic "Devil In The Angel" and the Saigon Kick-esque "Mother Of Love".

On the mediocre side comes the rock'n'roll of "Rockin' My Body" and the clichéd AC/DC style of "Terminate". But they do give AOR (remember that style of music, now underground?!) a good kick up the butt with "Nothin' Great About A Heartache", a perfect future single.

This band are so obviously marketable that I can't understand why they aren't on the covers of every magazine going. And if they pull it off live, they do indeed have a very healthy future. But why is it I heard so much about Mr. McRocklin before this project, but nothing since its release?

KELV HELLRAZER

JENNIFER BATTEN
Above Below And Beyond
(Voss Records - VCD2-72914)

★★★1/2

These days, it would seem, any guitarist with even a semblance of technique eventually succumbs to the lure of solo acclaim. Thus, the record bins are filled to capacity with all manner of fretboard furies, most of whom might be able to 'hammer on', but have no notion of melodic simplicity, nor of what makes the likes of Steve Vai so outstanding. Rather like every park footballer with two intact feet believing himself to be the new Maradona!

Jennifer Batten, though, is different. Firstly, she's female (an astute observation on my part, n'est-ce pas?). Secondly, she's spent the past five years performing with Michael Jackson's band. Thirdly, she can play - *really* play! And it's the third criterion that is the most important herein, because not only does she have an awesome technique, but allies this to a cooling, inviting sense of perspective. Thus, on her debut solo album, Ms. Batten displays a wide range of stylistic commands, from the out-and-out mania of "Ya Ain't Nothing Like A Fast Car" and "Cat Fight", to funked-out fruitiness through an instrumental cover of the Michael Jackson number "Wanna Be Startin' Somethin'" and a raucous, stomping cut-up of the Aretha Franklin soul standard "Respect", complete with hounding vocals from Medusa's Kali.

Jennifer Batten, you see, doesn't treat this record merely as an exercise in monosyllabic guitar language. It is a chance for her to offer a real insight into what can be achieved by an articulate musician. Even her rendition of the clichéd (in guitar terms) "Flight Of The Bumble Bee" is electrifying. And avant-garde jazz fans will find little to fault her interpretation of John Coltrane's "Giant Steps".

Strange, isn't it? The likes of Lita Ford have spent years vainly battling for respect as good rock guitarists per se, not merely *good female rock guitarists*. Now along comes somebody whom Michael Jackson introduced to the world - and she's effortlessly achieved here what all those supposed rock goddesses can never hope to gain. Yep, Jennifer Batten has class, style, aggression, power surges and a real affinity with her instrument. There are many major rock bands who could do a lot worse than offer her fortunes to join 'em!

MIKE MERCURY

THE BEAUTIES
The Beauties
(Gasoline Alley - 10575A)

★★★

The Beauties is Jason Nesmith's new outfit. Remember him? He is the son of former Monkee Michael Nesmith and was once the guitarist for Kill For Thrills (from whence came current Guns n' Roses guitarist Gilby Clark). Now he's back, and has unleashed a true star in vocalist Steven McNeil, whose Steven Tyler looks and general persona are gonna help put these boys on the map.

Collectively, this four-piece draw influences from Muddy Waters to the Beatles, from John Coltrane to Joni Mitchell. And it's pretty evident in their mixed-up collection of music.

"Asses" is classic funk-rock a la Stevie Salas, and "Mother's Finest Son" is also downright sassy. Elsewhere, there are quite a few...Well, very strange tracks indeed, including the oddly-titled "Battlegrounds And Double Standard". However, "Bed On Her Back" comes more Hellrazer-approved.

Other highpoints include the funk-rock of "Sexecutioner" (possessing a Saga-like quirkiness), the Aerosmithy "Fornication U.C.K." and the ever-so touching melody of "Something About The Pain". And if this band can hold together, who knows what they can achieve.

KELV HELLRAZER

COPPERHEAD
Copperhead
(Mercury - 314 514 046-2)

1/2

So Copperhead are supposed to be the rising once more of good old southern boogie eh? Bollocks!!

If the future of southern boogie lies in the hands of Copperhead then it's in a sorry state indeed. Sounding vaguely like a bad version of the Red Dogs playing down your local, the one thing that strikes you about Copperhead, apart from the fact that they're utter shite, is *How on earth did they land a record deal?!*

Lead vocalist Neil Caswell has the most uninspired voice, straining away to be heard, as the remaining members of the band bash out sub-standard Blackfoot-style fare. From opener "Busted" to the oh-so-predictable eight minute-plus *epic* (sic) "Long Way From Home" - mirroring all the other southern boogie epics (you know, "Freebird", "Fall Of The Peacemakers", "Highway Song", etc...) in everything but class - this is a dreadfully produced mish-mash that fails to capture the true glory of a once great sub-genre.

Anyone who liked the southern greats - you know, Skynyrd, Molly Hatchet, .38 Special, Blackfoot and co. - will be sadly disappointed. Copperhead cider always gives me a bloody awful headache and Copperhead the band do, too.

I recall the words of Charlie Daniels. *The south's gonna do it again!* the grizzled one once cried. Not if Copperhead have anything to do with it it ain't!

JERRY EWING

FARRCRY
Mister Red, White, Blue
(Granatt Records, - FCCD1001)

★★★★★

It is always comforting to know that in a lot of American states there are a number of bands playing the music they love, regardless of trends. Indeed, they're probably making more money that way than most signed, trendy acts. Iowa's Lynn Allen and Florida's Stranger come to mind. And now Farrcry, again from Florida, can be added to the list.

PARIAH
Make Believe
(Sick Kid Productions - SK-003)

★★★★

Pariah are now signed to Geffen Records and are currently working on their debut album in Hollywood with producer Tom Werman. In the meantime, here's a ten-track taster from the San Antonio band.

This album seems to show the band undergoing identity changes as the eight demo/rehearsal cuts and two live tracks unfold. Various influences from Guns n' Roses and Bang Tango to the Beatles are displayed, with vocalist Dave Derrick cutting a decided Axl Rose/Joe Lesté (Bang Tango) style on the drawling "This Means War". Things mellow out a little on the Beatles-esque "Jesus Freak". And to add to the diversity, "Powerless" hints at an almost grunge direction. Will the band follow this direction on their Geffen debut, given the present climate?

"Voice Of Reason" again changes the band's sound to something of a mid-west AOR style, with Derrick happily adapting his voice to fit. Other highlights include the Faster Pussycat style "Nobody Listens" and the live "Sin After Sin". Yes, diversity is Pariah's strong point, forever changing and keeping the listener on their toes.

To obtain a copy of this CD, write to: *Patt Solano, PO Box 690248, San Antonio, Texas 78767, USA.*

KELV HELLRAZER

The band's debut effort, "Mister Red, White, Blue" is well overdue and is something vocalist Mark Christian & Co. have had in the can for quite a while. This seven-track indie release is a monster that should well and truly put Farrcry on the map. The title cut reminds me of T-Ride, kind of rap meets Dokken. "Walkin' the Dog" is the old Rufus Thomas chestnut so associated these days with Aerosmith (Ratt have also covered it); Farrcry, though, breathe new fire into it.

In the meantime, "Loving You" is blissful AOR complete with killer fretwork from guitarist Craig Martin (a clone of former Angel Punky Meadows). "Walking Out The Door" starts out as pure AOR fantasy, then develops into a fast-paced rocker. "I'll Be The One" has the best chorus I've heard in ages, whilst "Caught In The Middle" rocks with class.

The band have already got great new material lined up. Can't wait to hear it!

KELV HELLRAZER

HEAVY BONES
Heavy Bones
(Reprise - Advance Tape)

★★★★

Having pussy-footed around with Cats In Boots, vocalist Joel Ellis gets down to some serious business with Heavy Bones. Adding weight to the band is former Quiet Riot/W.A.S.P. drummer Frankie Banali and - albeit in places - Heavy Bones show they can shake'n'rattle it with the best of them.

Take the sizzling "Light Of Day" or the sonorous "Your Love Won't Let Me Down", the latter being all Kingdom Come-like swagger. And yet...The ballads - "Turn It On", "Anna", "Beating Heart" and "Where Eagles Fly" - are such pathetically cringeworthy tunes as to mar the overall impression.

It takes the Louisiana swamp boogie of "Beating Heart", remarkably similar to Aerosmith's "Hangman Jury" (from "Permanent Vacation") to restore some credibility. That said, guitarist Gary Hoey is undoubtedly a sizeable talent, delivering some compelling riffola to fire up such quicksteps as "Summers In The Rain"" and the towering "The Hand That Feeds".

If Ellis & Co. are to make some kind of an impression, they should ditch the ballads and stick to the out-and-out rockers. Then these Bones would really roll.

ANDY MARTIN

JERUSALEM SLIM
Attitude Adjustment
(Mercury - PHRC-33)

★★★

What is wrong with these people? No sooner does Michael Monroe get his latest project off the ground (and it's certainly been a long time coming) than the whole thing's fallen apart. Guitarist Steve Stevens was quick to hotfoot it to Vince Neil's band (well, he knows what side his bread's buttered), and now we get a Jerusalem Slim album from a band that no longer exists.

As an album, this will undoubtedly be of interest to fans of the ice-man and the Japanese (this is indeed a Japanese import!), but is of little value to anyone else.

Which is a pity, because although not as solid as 1989's excellent "Not Fakin' It" solo outing from Monroe, there's some solid, trashy hard rock on offer here. And no-one does that better than Michael Monroe!

What is surprising is that the album starts so badly. Opening three cuts - "Rock'N'Roll Degeneration", "Deadman" and "Attitude Adjustment" (wasn't that a horse that ran in the National?) - all sound weak, which is surprising when you consider it's producer Michael Wagener behind the control panel!

"100 Proof Love" comes close to past glories, boasting a fine chorus and some fiery lead work from Stevens, whilst ex-Hanoi bassist Sam Yaffa and drummer Greg Ellis (formerly with Shark Island) supply the usual tight beat, and "Criminal Instinct" allows Monroe to revel in some sleazy grind.

Stevens executes some blatant Van Halen-isms on "Lethal Underground", some good old boogie-woogie on "Teenage Nervous Breakdown" (one of the album's weaker tracks), before the whole thing mellows out on "Gotta Get A Hold" and closing track "The World Is Watching" (the token ballad).

An added extra are demo versions of "Rock'N'Roll Degeneration" and "Teenage Nervous Breakdown" that are slightly rougher than the originals, but as they're two of the weaker tracks on the album, I guess they don't amount to that much!

At the end of the day most poeple figure Monroe's still fakin' it, even if he has got Yaffa alongside him. You see, just like everyone would rather have Led Zeppelin than Plant and Page solo albums, so they want Hanoi Rocks too, no matter how good Monroe is solo.

And with Jerusalem Slim's failure to get off the ground, then that once remote possibility starts looking all the more likely.

JERRY EWING

MICHAEL KATON
Get On The Boogie Train
(Wild Ass - WR 9225-2)

★★★★★

It's a dead cert that if you hail from a town called Hell, Michigan, you're not going to sound like DuranDuran. Michael Katon sounds much more like an intense version of the now-departed Georgia Satellites, if comparisons can be made at all. Katon quit the demon alcohol to make "Get On The Boogie Train" (his second album), and I'm more than a little impressed.

Katon's ability with all things guitar-like is incredible. It's quite literally a 50 feet high, three miles thick, steel-reinforced wall of electrifying sound. Backed up by great tunes and crystal production, provided by (who else?) Michael Katon himself.

The title track itself is a prime slab of southern-style blues rock mayhem. Guaranteed to get any slumbering rear-end out of its armchair. "Put My Blues Back On" fits like a favourite shirt - loose, comfortable and a bit worn. It's with "Where The Wild Ones Go", though, that I imagine Katon, the true citizen of Hell. His tones like bloodies razor blades, unforgiving and unafraid. Sounds like a Clint Eastwood film!

Side Two doesn't slacken. "Roadtested" is like a slap in the face. "Cadillac Assembly Line" is a less pompous version of Bon Jovi's "Dry

County", all about Christmas redundancy. But it's not as depressing as it sounds.

Katon's remake of Willie Dixon's classic "Every Girl I See" marks a rare achievement in that it actually does justice to the original! The same is true of Robert Johnson's "Walkin' Blues".

With the stomping "Love Hoo Doo" ending "...Boogie Train" in the same reckless, swinging style in which it all began when, or even if, Michael Katon will tour the UK again (not seen here in nearly five years). hey, if Katon's driving I'll have a first class ticket to Hell anytime!

CHERYL SMITH

MASQUERADE
Masquerade
(Dino - DINCD 15)

★★

The Scandinavians have long been able to turn out AOR in their sleep, but one only has to look at names like Tin Drum, Glory, Treat, Sons Of Angels, Pretty Maids, TNT, D★A★D, Skagarack and Stage Dolls to know that the rest of the world is more concerned with things other than perms with silly accents and cock-rock poses.

So what chance Masquerade? Well, in an age when even Europe (the demagogues of the Scandian parping dream) find themselves out on the street in America, from whence this genre evolved, one imagines very little.

And all this before they've parped out a note!

There's little to differentiate Masquerade from the aformentioned, although to their credit only bass player Henrik Lundberg (best thing about these sort of bands are their names!) opts for the rock star perm! Musically, they travel a well worn avenue with competence, it must be said, but with originality not on the menu, if you're looking for a bit of spark and vitality you'd have more luck searching for the proverbial needle in the haystack.

To Masquerade's credit, they make tracks like "Four Letter Words" (of which there are none of the naughty variety!), "Wild Child" and "Dancin' On The Edge" immediate and catchy, whilst if it's brooding sensuality you want then "Dawning Of The Day" just about suffices until the predictably massive chrous kicks in.

Throw in your average power ballads - "Sudden Love Affair", "All Night All Day" and "Lonely World" - and a couple of pointless instrumentals, and you've got a band who sound a bit like, but are not as good as, Unruly Child, who themselves sounded like, but were not as good as Signal!

Adequate enough to satisfy the paltry appetite of your average AOR fan, but lacking enough depth or character to secure a life outside of Sweden's snow capped peaks!

EUGENE SCRIBES

PHENOMENA III
Innervision
(Dino - DINCD 18)

★

When the first Phenomena project (a supergroup of sorts, I guess) caused a bit of a stir, I was still at school. Back then people like Cozy Powell, Mel Galley, Neil Murray and Don Airey (those involved) just about meant something. It was quite a while ago now, I can tell you.

In 1987 Tom Galley (the mastermind behind all of this) had a stab with with Phenomena II, but five years ago people were starting to realise that people like Ray Gillen, Max Bacon, John Wetton and Neil Murray (again!) meant jack shit! The only saving grace were the classy tones of Glenn Hughes.

Now in 1992, Galley releases a project that's reported to have been doing the rounds for a while now, Phenomena III. Like I and II, it's a ponderously plodding affair, opting a little more for standard AOR than the sludgy attempt at classic heavy rock of its predecessors.

Three members of Scott Gorham's able 21 Guns appear, including the guitarist himself, along with Queen's have-guitar-will-travel man Brian May, whilst vocals are handled by Keith Murrell, a man who once quit the ailing Mama's Boys to join Cliff Richard's backing singers (I kid you not!).

Now if this is the kind of line-up that excites you then you may just revel in the limp-wristed, clichéd AOR that "Innervision" offers. Running the gamut of bogstandard and crass rock song titles, from opener "Rock House" to closer "Rock My Soul", and checking in "If You Want To Rock", "What About Love", "A Whole Lot Of Love", "Secret Of Love" and "How Much Do You Love Me" along the way. This is insipid stuff (whoops, almost said inspired then!).

Played for and by the lobotomised, this is an horrific release.

EUGENE SCRIBES

STETNA
Set the World On Fire
(Screamin' Cat - EX 008)

★

Sometimes, every once in a while, when the planets are in the correct alignment, you feel so sorry for a band that you could consider murder. Having listened to "Set The World On Fire" I could quite happily plunge knives, hedgetrimmers, poisoned darts, etc. into vocalist Shauna Joyce and guitarist Troy Stetina (aka. Stetna) with no feelings of remorse.

The opening track, "Hair" must surely be a joke. Despite a valiant effort at *humour*, I wish they hadn't bothered. The fact is that I laughed longer and louder the last time I stapled my hand to the desk.

"Hollywood" doesn't get much better. *Hollywood is a ghost town, of plastic surgeons and topless bars*, moans Miss Joyce, *maybe someday you'll be a star.* It makes Warrant look positively intelligent.!

The Joyce/Stetina performance, it has to be said, is of a karaoke standard. Together, they sound something not unlike those bands you used to find in the bars Starsky & Hutch, Cagney & Lacey, etc. once frequented. You know, all frilly shirts, fluffy perms and horrible choruses. It's like a *Fame* school nightmare!

"Crazy" is sheer, mind-numbing boredom. Every line starts with *Take a trip*, with the exception of a few *Oohs* and *La la las*.

"You and I" and "Rain Song" fail to lift their heads abov the quagmire. "Politician" works hard to tread water, but lacks the essential gelling agent. The last track, "She's All She Needs", heads in a more natural, radio-friendly approach for Stetna. Face facts, rock just isn't their thing.

I hate to be so negative, but this is just such a mess, and lacking in any truly redeeming factors. At the end of the eight tracks, I find that a number of my brain cells have eroded, sanity is wearing thin. For a moment, I considered playing the thing again. Now, *that* is sad!

CHERYL SMITH

TRIXTER
Hear
(MCA - 10635)

★1/2

So, after hitting the platinum button with the dumb-ass "Trixter" album a couple of years back, vocalist Peter Loran, guitarist Steve Brown, bassist PJ Farley and drummer Mark Scott return with "Hear" in an attempt to prove they have class, style, mental agility and music prowess to go with their status. And what do they prove? Yeah, they're dumb-ass alright!

From the opener "Who Shall Say..."/"Road Of A Thousand Dreams", the band try to take on Bon Jovi with meaningful lyrics about hope, belief and the American dream. But it is all so trite and unacceptable that all it does is underscore that Trixter are...Dumb-ass. Later on, we get the balladic "As The Candle Burns", which is wet, dreary and packs about as much emotion as a plate of cold carrots. Bleugh! Oh, and then there's "Waiting In Line", the band's philosophical insight into the lost millions, waiting on street corners in despair. Yeah, about as convincing as Yogi Bear in the role of Hamlet.

No, Trixter should stick to what they're decent at - dumb-ass party tricks. For, it is only on the likes of "Rockin' Horse" and "Power Of Love" that they display any signs of confidence. Even if these songs still come across as hick town variations on Poison.

Perhaps only on the dynamic "Wild Is The Heart" do the band really display any hidden secrets, because this track actually does hint at a real talent lurking somewhere beneath the bullshit and Howard Benson production gloss. Maybe next time, Trixter will stop acting like spoilt brats in a chocolate factory and start developing their taste buds.

MALCOLM DOME

VALENTINE SALOON
Super Duper
(Pipeline - PIPECD 001)

★★★

Hard rock Nashville style? Doesn't quite seem right to me but there you go!

This four-piece may have roped in producer Jack 'Nirvana' Endino for plus points, but what they make in an impressive sound, they lose pretty quickly as almost every song fails steadfastly to stick in the mind for too long.

Now they're not bad at all, don't get me wrong. Valentine Saloon kick in with the kind of garage bombast that might just have prevented Faster Pussycat being dropped, and resolutely refuse to be pigeon-holed in any manner whatsoever.

Looking like a cross between Enuff Z'Nuff, Redd Kross and the Dogs D'Amour, and sounding occassionally like Soundgarden and Aeromsith got together to jam in your garage Valentine Saloon do grab attention, I'll grant them that. But if only they had more songs of the quality of "Sentimental Girl", with its huge, metallic riff, or even the slower, altogether dirtier "Under My Skin", both of which stand head and shoulders above the rest of the material on offer.

All too often Valentine Saloon play a hard rock hand that's good, but nothing special. Viz the staggered groove of "Private Revolution", the Skid Row with big choruses attack of "Mrs. Jones" or the hard driving Seattle feel of "Soak".

The altogether more punky/glam feel of "Cadillac King Revolver" once more demonstrates the band's ability to pen a fine chorus, and "Flying Machine" epitomises the sort of goth/indie/rock combination that Brit acts like The Cult and Icicle Works used to be so good at. A couple of Jacks in the Saloon's hand maybe, but those Aces are still missing.

At the end of the day Valentine Saloon are good enough not to have you wondering why they bothered making an album in the first place, but not remarkable enough to have you rushing out to get the next one.

JERRY EWING

VARIOUS
Bad Channels - O.S.T.
(Moonstone Records - 12936-2)

★★★

Apparently, *Bad Channels* is a fun, silly, throw-away teeny-alien movie. Well, I'll reserve judgement on the visual aspect. In the meantime, the soundtrack certainly offers up some strong moments, even if these are occasionally diluted by weak cuts. Much of the album is devoted to Blue dyster Cult, who provide both two new songs (the lightweight if subversive "Demon's Kiss" and the classic mantra of "The Horsemen Arrive"), plus 19 tracks of 20 minutes-plus background, ambient music that strangely works even out of the movie context. Good to see guitarists/vocalists/ keyboardsmen Eric Bloom/Buck Dharma, guitarist/keyboardsman Allen Lanier, bassist John Rogers and drummer Chuck Burgi in such fine form.

Elsewhere, we get the quirky, sinister Sykotik Sinfoney with "Manic Depresso" and "Mr Cool" (Devo fed on raw meat, injected with opium), the utterly ambivalent galactic folkiness of "Little Old Lady Polka" from The Ukelaliens, the straightahead hard rock of Fair Game ("Somewhere In The Night", "Blind Faith") and Joker ("That's How It Is", "Jane Jane (The Hurricane)") and the fuzz-ball grit of DMT ("Myth Of Freedom", "Touching Myself Again").

Overall, this is enjoyable fare, with BdC and Sykotik Sinfoney proving to be the outstanding proponents, whilst Joker and DMT proffer promise, Fair Game prove lightweight and The Ukelaliens are simply ridiculous.

MALCOLM DOME

VON GROOVE
Von Groove
(Chrysalis - 0946 3 21924 4)

★★★

Depending on your point of view, Von Groove are gonna be bloody brilliant or fuckin' dreadful. It will probably come as no surprise that, as they're signed to Chrysalis in the States, they don't sound a million miles from label mates Slaughter's party animal rock, so if that's the bag you're into...

Von Groove (I can't decide if I like the name or not) almost fall into the typical American melodic rock band trap of all the usual clichés, but there's a catchiness in some of this material, along with a power that only really lets up for the ballads. When I tell you that this album opens up with some young lass groaning *Ooh, that feels good,* you'll know what you're letting yourself in for. "Once Is Not Enough" kicks in pretty powerfully, all blazing guitars, catchy chorus, imploring vocals and a sample from Bon Jovi's "Bad Medicine", setting the scene for the rest of the album.

Kick ass, grooving melodic hard rock - you know the sort of thing. It may not exactly be today's essential listening, but here it's done well and is bound to get your foot tapping. "Better Than Ever" is arena rock with massive choruses, "Can't Get Too Much" goes for that kind of sex groove, but fails and both "Once In Your Lifetime" and "Love Keeps Bringing Me Down" your standard ballads.

If you like your rock a la Hardline, your t-shirt cut up and baseball boots nice and big then you'll go a bundle on rockers like "House Of My Dreams", "C'mon C'mon" and "Sweet Pain". Von Groove want to rock big believe you me.

Unfortunately for Von Groove, some of the material has that samey quality that means you can't sit through "Von Groove" in the way you used to with a Van Halen or Journey album. And that's why so many bands of this ilk are so frequently dropped after one or two albums.

And as enjoyable as "Von Groove" is, I'm afraid I can't find anything to suggest they can sustain their career for too long in this harsh financial climate.

JERRY EWING

COP SHOOT COP
Suck City EP
(Big Cat)

Four-track offering from semi-industrialist New York noise merchants. It boasts the surprisingly catchy "Nowhere", a track that rolls along on a booming bass riff, the exceedingly brutal "We Shall Be Changed", the dark "Days Will Pass" and the industrial-techno romp of the title track.

Given the rise in popularity of all things Jourgensen-like these days, the hitherto underground and nigh-on unknown Cop Shoot Cop may fight their way through the mire still.

WALTER TROUT BAND
Motivation Of Love
(Provogue)

Enter the man with the silliest name in rock music and the daftest moustache since Saga's Michael Sadler boasted a bit of lip fluff, and a track that reminds one of something Jeff Healey might have come up with.

All four tracks here offer standard blues-isms that do little to move the listener - well there's little new than can be done with the genre after all these years - and I'm afraid despite John Mayall's patronage, Walter Trout ain't the kind of blues guy I really get my kicks listening to.

PAVEMENT
Watery, Domestic
(Big Cat)

Perhaps the hippest band in America at the moment, if the press are to be believed, this American troupe offer a disappointing, watered-down grunge sound on "Texas Never Whispers" that leaves the listener wondering what all the fuss is about.

Both "Frontwards" and "Feed 'Em To The Lions (Linden)" come on like a metallic Velvet Underground and are distinctly better than the opener, although "Shoot The Singer" once more suggests that Pavement aren't quite as special as many have proclaimed.

DINOSAUR JR.
Start Choppin'
(Blanco Y Negro)

Although I've never really liked this lot before, I have to admit that "Start Choppin'" is a surprisingly melodic affair that leads a mellower existance than previous Dinosaur fare. J. Mascis indulges in some truly wonderful, disinterested vocals and I've a feeling this one could chart.

Backed with the grungier but equally excellent "Turnip Farm" I admit my past mistakes and will be listening with more open ears in the future.

LITTLE ANGELS
Womankind
(Polydor)

They rip off a melody from Pink Floyd's "Dark Side Of The Moon" at the beginning, but no matter. They borrowed from Def Leppard's "Rocket" on "Boneyard" in 1991 and I guess Floyd's a better choice! It certainly hints at the maturity creeping into the Angels' sound these days.

"Womankind" is a slow, soulful, bluesy workout that operates in the ballad area and features an excellent vocal job from Toby Jepson. Far more r'n'b-influenced hard rock these days than the pop-metal act that "Young Gods" seemed to have them tagged as, Little Angels stand easily as the most impressive of the British rock bands yearning for Leppard's international mantle.

JESUS JONES
The Devil You Know
(Food)

Stomping techno-rocker from the forthcoming "Perverse" album that's bound to shock most who hear it and quite frankly pisses over most of this month's singles.

As with EMF, the Jones boys are taking their techno-pop-thrash into heavier realms. This may start off all melodic and mellow, but it soon kicks into gear with some crashing powerchords that blend with Mike Edwards' distinctive vocals.

Mainman Edwards has long been critical of rock, but here we find him creating a great rock track from his beloved techno sounds. Given the current trend in rock clubs for more dancey sounds, interesting times are ahead.

If you lean towards the more melodic industrial sounds or revel in dancecore then you'll love this noisy number.

IZZY STRADLIN AND THE JU JU HOUNDS
Shuffle It
(Geffen)

A slow and easy bluesy romp that sounds like it should have come from Keith Richards' "Talk Is Cheap" album. Kind of blows Izzy's cover if you ask me!

NIRVANA
In Bloom
(Geffen)

Yet more noisy, melodic revelry from the band of 1992. Enjoyable, loud, abrasive, catchy and irreverent, it will undoubtedly follow "...Teen Spirit" and "Come As You Are" into the charts. Hugely enjoyable.

SENSELESS THINGS
Homphobic Asshole
(Epic)

Quite obviously titled to appeal to Radio One. NOT!

One stands back cautiously at the title at first, however well intended it may be. Like, you talkin' to me? Hopefully not. This is, nevertheless, an excellent piece of work.

Far heavier than anything on their "First Of Too Many" album, it works in a vaguely Ministry-esque way whilst pointing the finger directly.

After a drink or three, ya stopped making sense to me, started cussing gays with hate, like you ain't all right if you ain't straight, is how it goes, and you have to be pretty sad to disagree.

Along with "Body Bag" and "Just Flirting", they're really rocking and well worth checking out.

POISON
Stand
(Capitol)

Kelv Hellrazer broke down in tears when this was delivered to the office, and was sent home for a cold shower after it had been played! Yes, Poison are back and Wiggy's happy again.

Is it any good? Well, I must say that it's a lot better than I thought, and miles better than some of their earlier stuff. It would now appear that Poison are a blues rock band with the arrival of new guitarist Richie Kotzen, and although this gospel-tinged ballad has more substance than, say, "Unskinny Bop", it still leaves you unsatisfied.

Whether anyone's going to take them seriously nowadays remains to be seen, but the little girls should be happy.

METALLICA
Sad But True
(Vertigo)

They may be milking the "Metallica" album for all its worth, but it's a great record, and well, if it has shifted some nine million worldwide I guess you can't really blame them gunning for a few more!

Still, a rowdy rocker that's as subtle as a baseball bat in the face, if not as classsily impressive as earlier works like "Creeping Death", showing the band's ability to blend melody with their power yet lose none of their intensity.

Should keep all those horrified at the Die Krupps tribute album very happy indeed.

FAITH NO MORE
Be Aggressive
(Slash/London)

Kicking into this booming *Phantom Of The Opera* opening and then jumping head first into this '70s style funk rush this is quirky, jumpy and brilliant.

Patton raps, fast and furious, some cheerleaders supply the sing-a-long *B-E-A-G-G-R-E-S-S-I-V-E* chorus and Jim Martin rips into a wicked guitar solo.

Musically challenging, thumbing its nose at everyone, Patton wails *I swallow, I swallow.* Yes, it's got to be the first single about one man giving another a blow job.

Here's to this one in the Top 40!

MF CHARTS

CHARTS

MEGASTORES

ALBUMS

1 - KEEP THE FAITH - Bon Jovi (Jambco)
2 - LIVE - AC/DC (Atco)
3 - THE ULTIMATE EXPERIENCE - Jimi Hendrix (Polydor)
4 - DIRT - Alice In Chains (Columbia)
5 - THE FOURTH CRUSADE - Bolt Thrower (Earache)
6 - NEVERMIND - Nirvana (Geffen)
7 - USE YOUR ILLUSION II - Guns n' Roses (Geffen)
8 - WHAT HITS!? - Red Hot Chili Peppers (EMI)
9 - III SIDES TO EVERY STORY - Extreme (A&M)
10 - USE YOUR ILLUSION I - Guns n' Roses (Geffen)
11 - COPPER BLUE - Sugar (Creation)
12 - METALLICA - Metallica (Vertigo)
13 - NAIVE - Various (Earache)
14 - TEN - Pearl Jam (Epic)
15 - MONDO BIZARRO - The Ramones (Chrysalis)
16 - LIVE ALIVE QUO - Status Quo (Polydor)
17 - NURSE - Therapy? (A&M)
18 - BROKEN - Nine Inch Nails (Island)
19 - JU JU HOUNDS - Izzy Stradlin And The Ju Ju Hounds (Geffen)
20 - COUNTDOWN TO EXTINCTION - Megadeth (Capitol)

Chart compiled from sales in VIRGIN MEGASTORES

SINGLES

1 - YESTERDAYS - Guns n' Roses (Geffen)
2 - MRS. ROBINSON - The Lemonheads (Atlantic)
3 - EVERYTHING'S RUINED - Faith No More (Slash/London)
4 - IN BLOOM - Nirvana (Geffen)
5 - HOTEL ILLNESS - Black Crowes (Def American)
6 - INTACT - Ned's Atomic Dustbin (Soho Square)
7 - HOMOPHOBIC ASSHOLE - Senseless Things (Epic)
8 - PRETEND WE'RE DEAD - L7 (Slash/London)
9 - GET ME - Dinosaur Jr.(Warner Brothers)
10 - LITTLE BABY NOTHING - Manic Street Preachers (Columbia)

Chart compiled from sales in VIRGIN MEGASTORES

SUGAR - SWEETENING UP THE ALBUM CHARTS

IMPORTS

1 - VON GROOVE - Von Groove (Capitol)
2 - SAINTS & SINNERS - Saints & Sinners (SGE)
3 - BEAUTIES - Beauties (Gasoline Alley)
4 - COPPERHEAD - Copperhead (Polygram)
5 - HEAR - Trixter (MCA)
6 - CUATRO - Flotsam & Jetsam (MCA)
7 - GROUP THERAPY - Southgang (Capitol)
8 - ABOVE, BELOW - Jennifer Batten (Voss)
9 - BETWEEN TWO FIRES - Cell Mates (Scotti Bros)
10 - NOW I EAT THEM - Xtra Large (Warner Brothers)

Compiled by PANTHER MUSIC, Unit 4 Chapmans Park Ind. Estate, 378-388 High Road, Willesden, London, NW10 2DY

CLUB CHART

1 - N.W.O. - Ministry
2 - JUMP AROUND - House Of Pain
3 - MIDLIFE CRISIS - Faith No More
4 - THUNDERKISS '65 - White Zombie
5 - LOUDSPEAKER - Skatenigs
6 - BULLETPROOF - Poppies
7 - BODYCOUNTS IN THE HOUSE - Bodycount
8 - SUCKS - KMFDM
9 - A GOOD IDEA - Sugar
10 - YOU SUCK - Consolidated

Compiled by Shuff at ROCKIT, Borderline, London - every Thursday 11.30 pm - 3 am

Metallica have always striven to be different from the pack. Not always successfully, but always in an interesting and challenging manner. Thus, the infamous 'Snake Pit' design for the stage set. Thus, a plethora of cover versions (who do you think started the trend?). Thus, the "Kliff 'em All" home video. It seems as if drummer Lars Ulrich, guitarist/vocalist James Hetfield, lead guitarist Kirk Hammett and bassist Jason Newsted are determined to be *different*... Even if, in the process, they fall flat on their faces.

Not that **"A Year And A Half In The Life Of..."** (PolyGram Video) is by any means a failure. It's that there are signs herein that the band really are becoming just a little *too* obsessed with being *individual*... And in the process proving themselves to be no different to a myriad other arena bands. And, let's face it, that is precisely what Metallica are!

"A Year And A Half..." comes in two parts, each dedicated to a different aspect of the Metallica animal. In Part 1 we see the foursome in the studio recording what has since become the multi-miillion selling "Metallica" album. But, as anyone who has ever spent some time in a recording studio will tell you, it is *boooring* for an outsider. Nothing really happens, except a lot of people sitting around looking and acting *bored*, whilst one person plucks and strums away in a recording booth. And having a camera constantly trained on Metallica just points up the boredom of the procedure. Sure, there are the usual japes, occasional porno videos screened to relieve the monotony and much munching of food and quaffing of liquids - but precious little else.

Producer Bob Rock does seem ill at ease with the constant attentions of the camera, and given the fact that a studio is a very private environment this is not too surprising. And the video has also been very carefully edited to make the band seem like fun-loving, happy-go-lucky fellas without a care in the world. Only on two occasions are there signs of the studio tensions that always occur. One happens when Bob Rock is trying to ellicit a certain type of guitar solo from Hammett, whilst the ever-onlooking Ulrich suggests to the producer that Hammett isn't actually capable of delivering such a solo! The second takes place during the mixing stage, as the band argue about the relative volume of different instruments, whilst Bob Rock seems almost exasperated.

Perhaps the most telling moment on this video comes when the band open their doors to a young fan suffering from cancer. There is something decidedly moving as we watch him jam with the guys on a version of Kiss' "Detroit Rock City". Hammett is moved close to tears.

But, in general only the presence of the promo videos for "Enter Sandman", "Nothing Else Matters" and "The Unforgiven" (in themselves, videos which I find rather lame) break the monotony.

Part 2 takes Metallica on the road, and again has been carefully edited to make the band seem without a care in the world. What one gets is the usual mixture of live footage and backstage antics. And, it has to be said, that there is very little to really make the band stand out from any other major act in this respect. However, there *are* some unique moments, without a doubt. The footage that appertains to Metallica's appearance in the summer at the AIDS benefit concert reveals Hetfield as a true enthusiast, even a tad nervous as he rehearses with the likes of Brian May and Tony Iommi on "Stone Cold Crazy". And the segment on the notorious co-headlining tour with Guns n' Roses leaves one in no doubt that Metallica were none too impressed with Mr. Axl Rose.

Gn'R guitarist Slash is seen hanging out regularly with the Metalli-boys, but of Axl there are only fleeting glimpses between bodyguards, and Hetfield makes his views known on what he feels about the troubled singer!

Funniest moment on the video, though, occurs when Ulrich and Hammett are caught waiting by the Metalli-plane on the runway in the hope of catching a glimpse of Dire Straits, whose own plane is thought to be parked close by. As they seem to be freezing in the open, Ulrich suddenly makes the point that there is no point in the pair waiting around to see if Dire Starits turn up - because they don't like the band anyway! Silly boys!!

Aside from that, there is much for the Metallica *fan* to appreciate, but very little for anybody else to pick up on. Yet...

In a strange way, this video really *does* capture the essence of the four personalities involved with the band - deliberately or otherwise. Newsted is portrayed as very much the junior, seemingly tolerated only because he is the butt of much jesting. Hammett lives in a world of his own and occasionally is seen as a strictly limited musician who is still in the band only because of inertia - better the devil you know, etc. Ulrich? He is very much the businessman who feels that he runs the band, despite his lack of talent behind the kit. Comments and hints peppered throughout this video suggest that certain members of the band and production team are none too impressed with his abilities. What's more, his attitude screams of raging egomania, reaching a zenith when he departs the private plane and gets into a white limo, as the rest of the band pile into a van!

No, it is Hetfield who across as being the heart and soul of Metallica. He seems to have a genuine rapport with fans, media personnel, roadies, other musos, etc. He is the man whose deportment and approach really does suggest that he hasn't changed in the slightest as Metallica have become increasingly huge.

Overall? A release for Metallica fans only - although I suspect that was the whole point to this video. I would suggest, though, that if you want a more objective picture of the band, then check out the first full-length biography published on them. Titled **"Metallica - A Visual Documentary"** (Omnibus), it was co-written by Xavier Russell and Mark Putterford, well-known names in the realms of rock journalism. And the former has connections with the band that go right back virtually to their beginnings. Their views on the way in which Metallica have sold out their beliefs in pursuit of the dollar might raise some heckles, but is well researched and honest. No, it's not a video, but if we're talking about Metallica, then it does the job a little better than their officially sanctioned merchandise.

"S.O.D. - Live At The Bodokan" (Music For Nations) is more enjoyable video fare, being naturally more upbeat and, just...Well, *fun*. Shot in March when Dan Lilker (bass), Billy Milano (vocals), Scott Ian (guitar) and Charlie Benante (drums) reformed Stormtroopers Of Death for a show at The Ritz in New York, this has no pretensions. it sets out to capture the atmosphere of the moment - and succeeds admirably. No arena rock humbug here!

Best release here, though, is surprisingly **"Glitch"** (Video For Nations), an 11-track mix of live footage and off-stage interviews with the all-star industrial conglomerate of Pigface (you know, Martin Atkins, Trent Reznor, Chris Connelly, Jim Thirwell and anybody else in the vicinity), Shot simply and cheaply, this is so effective because it is real. The energy level of band and audience comes roaring through the camera on this US tour. Magnificent. One for all fans of the genre. Proof that this union of disparate musicians works best in a live environment.

MALCOLM DOME

TERROR

Welcome to TERROR, a monthly column that will be taking a look at all things bizarre in the media world. Most months that means a round-up of what's available in the world of horror film releases, and the occasional interview with leading lights in the film world as and when required.

But this month we concentrate on something infinitely more bizarre. Read on...

Following the release of Nine Inch Nails' recent "Fixed" mini album, controversy has arisen over one of the four intended promotional videos for the "Fixed" predecessor "Broken". Readers should already be aware that "Fixed" features various remixes of tracks that appeared on "Broken", and it is the video for the track "Happiness In Slavery" that has caused all the trouble.

Given that much of the latest Nine Inch Nails material is a far cry from the industrial dance direction of the band's "Pretty Hate Machine" debut, mainman Trent Reznor now experimenting with far more extremist sounds, thus the subject matter has also become far more bizarre.

"A world in which people willingly submit to ritualized sadomasochistic relationships with devouring machines. There is a symbiotic relationship on which the machine provides the man with pleasure and in turn people give themselves to the machine and its desires," is how a recent Island Records press release described the basis of the track "Happiness In Slavery", and this forms the crux of the subject matter of the offending promotional film that accompanies the track.

The version of "Happiness In Slavery" used is taken from "Broken" - a far more industrial-dance orientated track than much of the other material on offer - and not the re-mix from "Fixed", which is an altogether more exotic piece of music.

Slave screams, he's being beat into submission, don't open your eyes you won't like what you see, take it from me I have found happiness in slavery.

Accompanying the initial rush of music and Reznor's blazing vocals are the images (in black and white) of a man entering a room, the centre-piece of which is a strange chair. The man lights a candle (strong Catholic imagery), removes his clothes, methodically folding them. and washes himself in front of a mirror. The man is preparing himself for the ensuing ritual. The scene is set.

The contentious part of the film starts when the man sits in the chair, for it then comes to life as some piece of dominating machinery, grabbing hold of the mans arms, inserting needles into his hands, arms reaching out and grabbing parts of his body, including all his genitals, before the machine slowly tears the man to pieces as he screams and slowly draws the bits of his body into itself, before spewing them out as a mincer would mincemeat.

The room returned to its previous state, in enters a besuited Trent Reznor, who lights a candle, and moves towards the mirror as if to repeat the whole scene when the film concludes.

Although the film runs at the hectic pace of the music, thus committing most of the images to fly by too fast to sufficiently take it all in, there are strong elements of the *Hellraiser* films, especially the mystic puzzle box, which, when solved yields the victor up to the horrific pleasure of pain, as well as borrowing the mincer idea, one would have thought, from *The Wall*.

Directed by Jonathon Reiss, this is a stark and horrific film, although it should be remembered that the video for "Sin" (from "Pretty Hate Machine") featured genital piercing.

Naturally, when the film went before the BBFC for certification, they informed Island Records they would not be granting it a certificate, in the same manner they would any video they considered too explicit for public viewing (ie. many of the films withdrawn after the implication of the 1984 Video Recordings Act, which saw films like *Cannibal Holocaust, Eaten Alive, The Exorcist, Zombie Flesheaters* or *House By The Cemetary* - although it's interesting to note that at least three of these titles are now available in shops).

Island Records were also informed they could not supply people with copies of this video. Having seen the offending film it's easy to understand why. The film is shocking and I enjoy some fairly extreme horror films. It owes more than a little to the *Faces Of Death* series of films (banned everywhere, I believe), in which actual deaths are supposedly shown, or the Italian *Mondo Cane* style of films depicting how nature inflicts sever extremeties on living things. None are so-called 'snuff' movies, but the furore remains.

Reznor himself has made no comment on the banning of the "Happiness In Slavery" film, although the following quote was issued by his UK management:

The decision is very disappointing for the band and everyone working on the "Broken" and "Fixed" films.

I find it ironic that it should be the UK that bans this film, when we have had no problems whatsoever in the US and don't really expect to. Obviously there will be certain programmes that may not wish to show the film, but there seems little justification to ban it outright.

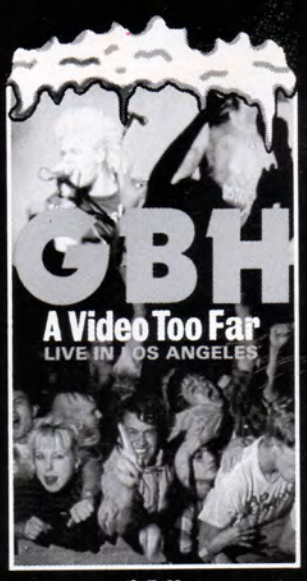
This is a film and not a promo video for a new single. For that reason, it should be treated as such. Unfortunately, this decision now means that most Nine Inch Nails fans will never be able to see it.

Whilst it is amusing to think of "Happiness In Slavery" being aired on *Top Of The Pops*, the whole incident raises the issue of just how far will certain artists take their cause, and how far will the authorities go to stop them. Reznor himself is currently working in the same Los Angeles house where Charles Manson's followers murdered Sharon Tate.

Worth remembering perhaps, next time you take to the dance floor to the strains of "Head Like A Hole"!

JERRY EWING

A STILL FROM THE "HAPPINESS IN SLAVERY" FILM. INSET: TRENT REZNOR



G.B.H.
'A VIDEO TOO FAR'
(LIVE) VFN 1

ARMORED SAINT
'A TRIP THRU RED TIMES'
(LIVE + PROMO) VFN 2

GWAR
'PHALLUS IN WONDERLAND'
(PROMO + STORY) VFN 5

TIGERTAILZ
'VIDEO FRENZY'
(PROMO'S) VFN 6

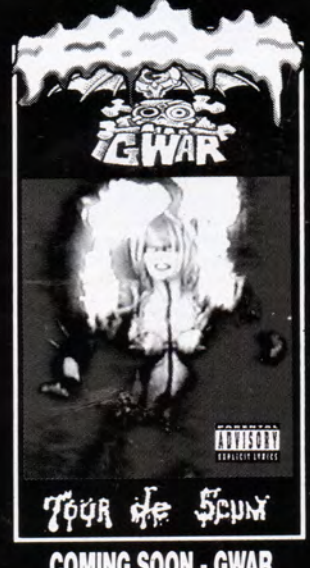
IF YOUR MATE WATCHES VIDEOS GIVE 'EM ONE FOR XMAS

Video For Nations

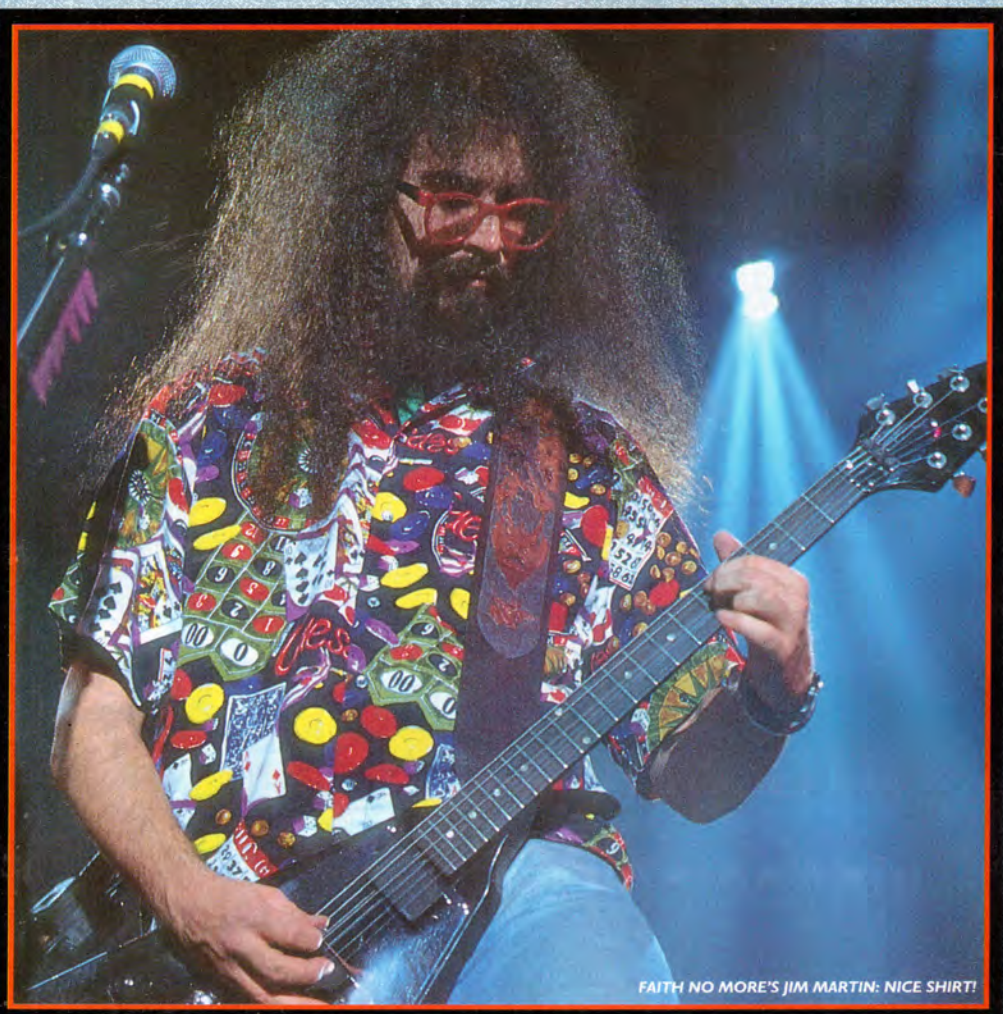
PIGFACE
'GLITCH'
(LIVE + PROMO) VFN 7

REVOLTING COCKS
'YOU GODDAM SON OF A BITCH'
(LIVE) VFN 8

S.O.D.
'LIVE AT BUDOKAN'
(LIVE) VFN 10



COMING SOON - GWAR
'TOUR DE SCUM'
(LIVE) VFN 9



FAITH NO MORE'S JIM MARTIN: NICE SHIRT!

Faith No More pics: Nick Matthews

FAITH NO MORE/L7
Brixton Academy, London

The crowd are going barmy for L7. It's almost as if they were headlining. They're not, but only the limited stage lighting gives the game away.

Inbetween healthy doses of L7's grunge-fuelled, loadsafun hard rock they play Faith No More's game of no respect. Just like their touring partners' berating of Axl Rose & Co. on the recent American tour, so L7 show scant respect for FNM by blasting into a droning run through of "We Care A Lot" every so often. The crowd love it.

By the time I'd got to the venue, Donita Sparks and Jennifer Finch were already headbanging like the possessed, so I couldn't tell you whether they'd done "Wargasm", but they growled through "Monster" and "Shove" and somewhat predictably ended with "Pretend We're Dead".

Judging by the reaction L7 are big news already. The Academy went potty, no-one mentioned Girlschool and you could have been forgiven for going home thinking the gig was over when they quit the stage.

Apart from the fact that Faith No More probably had the audience in the palm of their hand before they even came onstage tonight. When they do it's to a jazzed-up version of Europe's "The Final Countdown" and before they've played a note they're running on the spot and indulging in a bout of rock'n'roll aerobics. I swear Jim Martin looked like he wanted to puke. Maybe it was the Europe. Then again, maybe not!

"Caffeine" is simply huge and rolls over the crowd as Billy Gould's bass rumbles, Martin's guitar shreds and Patton's off on one of those epileptic dances he does. The lighting is fantastic, the song's sound great and the crowd can't get enough. But onstage FNM don't look like they're really getting off on this gig.

Maybe it's the because it's the third night of three at Brixton (whilst everyone's been babbling about how the "Angel Dust" album hasn't been doing as well as some thought it would, the band who made the bloody thing have been selling out venues the country over, including an unprecedented four nights at Glasgow Barrowlands!), but there's an air of disinterest up there tonight. It's not rubbing off on the material thank god, and "Land Of Sunshine", "Midlife Crises", "Falling To Pieces", "Be Aggressive" and "Epic" all sound fantastic.

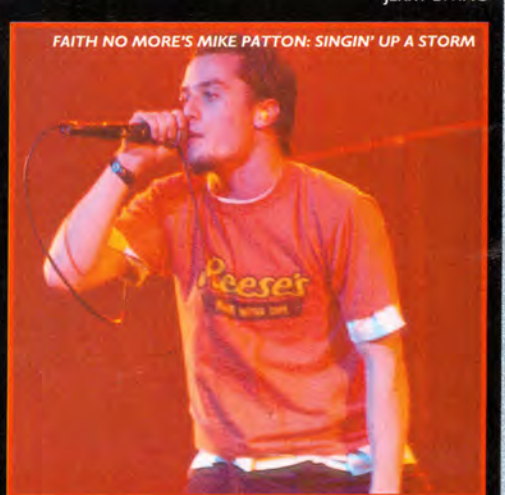
Patton possesses a truly marvellous voice, and when they slip into their cover of The Commodores' "Easy", complete with exact replica guitar solo from Jim Martin, he shines with a passion that's occassionally lost on material with the thrust of "Surprise! You're Dead".

But Faith No More's strong point is their ability to musically cross over, often in the middle of the same song, and take an until recently narrow-minded audience with them. They could be all things to one or one thing to all, but they're not. They're Faith No More, and even on an off-ish night, they're brilliant.

They offer up "We Care A Lot", but neglect to play the full-on charge of "From Out Of Nowhere" as if it's already an albatross around their neck. So what, we can always go home and listen to it.

Faith No More offer relief from the mundane, MTV-inspired world in which we live and yet find themselves a part of that very same world. It's a crazy world in which we live, but then I guess that just suits Faith No More just fine.

JERRY EWING



FAITH NO MORE'S MIKE PATTON: SINGIN' UP A STORM

RICHARD MARX
Hammersmith Odeon, London

And I missed *Brookside* for this!

Uh god, the Odeon's full of *Thirtysomethings*, who think Richard Marx is dangerous and who are whooping with delight at every inane utterance a man who challenges Michael Bolton for daft hair makes.

"This is the kind of song you put on when you want to get laid", squeaks Marx by way of introduction to the "Keep Coming Back". No mate, when I want to get laid I stick on some wickedly slinky funk or sleazy soul, not lame-brained soulless rock like this.

Richard Marx is about as dangerous as Derek Nimmo!

Resplendent in nice white shirt and gaudy red waistcoat and jacket Marx looks like a cross between a Butlin's redcoat and Barry Manilow, and comes on like an over-enthusiastic Denis de Young on "I Can't Help Falling In Love".

"There are some sick perverted people in the front row", he cries, inciting delirious cries from the women. Yes, there must be if they paid to see this drivel.

Richard Marx has thus far unleashed a reasonable AOR debut, and two lacklustre follow-ups on the world, and although he's shown the ability to play some catchy hard rock, tonight he's opting for the Las Vegas style rock'n'roll show. And it sucks.

Opting for a mid-section of acoustic versions of old Elvis songs instead of his own almost sent me catatonic, and I assume the rest of the audience too when Marx ended one song and the audience continued clapping along like robots, as they had throughout the song. Apparantly, Paul Young was supposed to have turned up for a duet but wisely thought better of it.

"Hazard" was the lone high point, with Marx thanking his record company for getting it in the charts. Great one, but they didn't give a hoot when the album first came out, mate! From thereonin it went down hill as he opted for the slushy weepies.

"Take This Heart", "Angelia", "Chains Around My Heart" and "Endless Summer Nights" and I'd had enough. This was about as rock'n'roll as sunday lunch. So what if it was raining. I was off home.

Utter nonsense.

EUGENE SCRIBES

KREATOR/ BIOHAZARD
The Marquee, London

OK, I missed Biohazard. Not my fault. I was told the wrong time *(Bollocks Dome, you were in the pub getting pissed with me! - Deputy Ed.)*. However, they're worth a quick mention. And based on a quick straw poll of a few members of the audience, the band were excellent and received a rapturous reception.

As for Kreator, well I've always liked them onstage. Good, vibrant energy. Thick, guitar-led sound. Thrash as it should be performed. However, they have always let themselves down on record, at least in my estimation. But their latest release, "Renewal", suggests that the German foursome are at last beginning to find their length and line in the studio as well. And this newfound confidence made the band's live presentation even more addictive than before.

With a nicely packed, sweating mound of flesh eagerly anticipating every note and rhythmic clamber, guitarist/vocalist Mille Petrozza led his troops expertly through set opener "Winter Martyrium" (shades of Van Halen's "Everybody Wants Some!!" with an industrial fever) and thence a set based firmly around "Renewal", in the process amply proving that state-of-the-art thrash is far

from dead.

What Kreator did was open up their sound and thereby develop a tighter efficiency. Mille, fellow guitarist Frank Blackfire, bassist Rob and drummer Ventor are among the finest thrash acts in the world at the moment. They have mastered the trick of maturing without a loss of energy. Thus old classics like "Pleasure To Kill", "Extreme Aggression" and "Flag Of Hate" lost none of their inherent dynamism, however improved musicianship in the band allied muscle to subtelty. Still perfect for stage diving, but also for listening.

It was the new material, though, that really caught the attention. "Brainseed", "Renewal", "Europe After The Rain" and "Carmic Wheel", among others, literally seethed with a weighty potency, keeping the crowd entranced.

In a genre overburdened with mediocrity, Kreator tonight showed the way forward. I just hope it is for the majority a lesson well learned.

MALCOLM DOME

SHONEN KNIFE
ULU, London

Imagine, if you will, three Japanese girls who have grown up in a controlled environment. Into this carefully regulated environ (hermetically sealed off from reality) is pumped *The Monkees* TV show, numerous Hanna-Barbera cartoons (especially *Josie & The Pusycats*), early '60s US sit-coms (such as *I Dream Of Jeanie*) and a soundtrack consisting of The Ronettes, The Shangri-Las, Cliff Richards & the Shadows and The Ramones.

Now imagine these three girls being given a guitar, bass, drum set and microphones. Et voila - instant Shonen Knife!

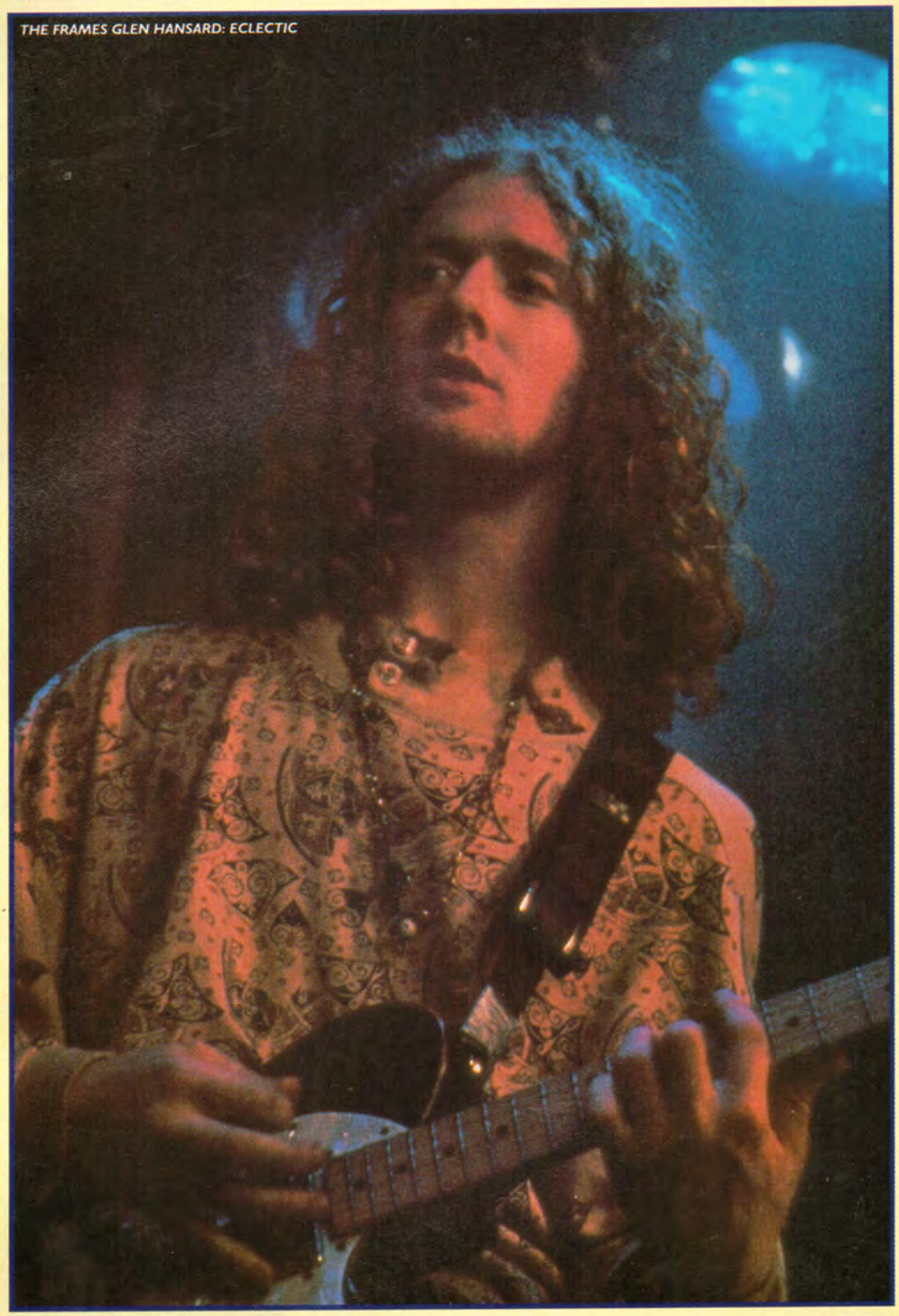
Well, maybe that *is* an oversimplification. But the veracity of the statement by and large held true, judging by tonight's performance. You see, this was something rarely seen in these seen-it-all-heard-it-all-done-it-all '90s - a show that put the innocence and naivety back into rock'n'roll. From the opening strains of "Bear Up Bison" the trio of Naoko Yamano (guitar), Michie Nakatani (bass) and Atsuko Yamano (drums - all three sing) had the packed crowd in raptures of enjoyment. This was fun and funny. Indeed, hilarious. Kitsch certainly, but also somewhat hypnotic. The sight and sound of three tiny Japanese girls emulating the vocal harmonies of the Phil Spector era to the backdrop of early Ramones, as they ran through songs with such titles as "Riding On The Rocket" (for once a title with no sexual overtones), "Twist Barbie", "Space Christmas", "Antonio Baka Guy", "Flying Jelly Attack", newie "Brown Mushroom" and "Cycling Is Fun"...Well, it was all enchanting, charming . Each song had the harmonies, the quick Hank Marvin-by-numbers guitar solo and ended in a welter of onstage bows.

The crowd loved it all, throwing sweets onto the stage, as well as indulging in the occasional stage dive. Who'd have thought a band such as this could exist today?! But here they were, the house band from a long-forgotten '61 Godzilla movie, playing their li'l hearts out, as the green monster once again destroys Tokyo. They deserve their own TV series. In cartoon form, of course. Shonen Knife may not save the world from Godzila, but at least we'll go out smiling.

MALCOLM DOME

PARADISE LOST/ CEREBRAL FIX
The Marquee, London

Pity poor Cerebral Fix. A Birmingham band who have spent so long on the back-burner of UK death metal that they must have ➤P71



THE FRAMES GLEN HANSARD: ECLECTIC

THE FRAMES
Marquee, London

"This song's called "Icksy Fucker"," grins Frames frontman Glen Hansard, his right hand twitching eagerly at the strings of his guitar, before he leads his raggle-taggle troupe into something that largely resembles Trouble's "Come Touch The Sky", all superspeed mountainous riffs that certainly rocks The Marquee tonight.

The Frames are an enigma. Coming on for the most part like a harder version of The Waterboys, this Irish-based six-piece have been charming audiences for a while now, and tonight charming they most certainly were. And infuriating too!

It is the journalist's wont to categorise all he surveys in order to relay to the public exactly what it is he sees. As far as The Frames are concerned this can be many things. Talking Heads, U2, Simple Minds, Sex Pistols, The Undertones, all these flitted through my mind as the band crashed maniacally through an engaging set that owed little to the whimsical folkiness inherent on their "Another Love Song" debut, and more to Hansard's driving performance.

Aided by the equally off-the-wall crazed dancing of fellow vocalist Noreen O'Donnell and the frenzied fiddling of Colm Mac Con Iomaire (sadly inaudible for the first half of the set), one is struck with an image that recalls barmy pagan rockers Skyclad, only you laugh *with* The Frames, not *at* them!

Whilst the likes of "The Waltz", "The Dancer" and "Another Love Song" itself display The Frames ability to delve into loud rock'n'roll, "Before You Go" is probably the folk equivalent of a power-ballad, allowing an easing calm to fall over the 'til now frenzied Irish dancers in the audience, of which there were many!

Most interesting, however, was a cover of T-Rex's "Life's A Gas", offering perhaps more of an insight into Hansard's inspiration tonight than anything else (he does a good imitation, too!), and the bizarre first encore of "Your Face", which brings to mind great British eccentrics like Syd Barrett, Kevin Ayers and Nick Drake..

In Glen Hansard, The Frames may have another eccentric, and certainly a possessed performer, but also a leader of a band with some fine tunes and an interesting future ahead of them.

If you like your rock with a twist of the bizarre, hard but not easily categorised, then The Frames are for you. Check them out.

JERRY EWING

THE BLACK CROWES CHRIS ROBINSON: LIGHTS OUT IN LONDON

Black Crowes pics: Nick Matthews

BLACK CROWES
Brixton Academy, London

The champions of The Weed are in town. Brixton Academy, the heart of the capital's Ecstacy-driven rave scene, is a funhouse of another order tonight. This evening's hosts are the Black Crowes, the resurrectors of "Nod's As Good As A Wink To A Blind Horse"-inspired boogie and now, apparently, the self-appointed Sultans of the Spliff. For, midway through a stirring, funky cover of the Bob Marley reggae classic "Everything's Gonna be Alright Now", a huge banner swirls across from stage left, depciting a large cannabis leaf and proclaiming - to cheers - *Free Us - No Narcs.*

From the renowned debunkers of all things corporate, this is the Black Crowes' philosophy writ large. Not only is their music richly organic, but they're not afraid of declaring the fact that they're partial to a bit of a puff, which isn't going to dent their ever-growing credibility one jot (or one pot!).

Let's face it, the ragged troupe from Atlanta are on a high of another order at the moment - and it shows. Their widely lauded second album, "The Southern Harmony And Musical Companion", contains a stirring set of songs that shrugs off the spurious Faces comparisons with the contempt they deserve. Indeed, most of tonight's set is drawn from the second record, with "Twice As Hard", "She Talks To Angels" and "Jealous Again" all trawled from "our adolescence", as spindly Chris Robinson declares. The pencil-thin singer is on top form, scrawling abstract patterns as he skips across the stage stirring the heaving auditorium to wild abandon.

The Crowes grind through "Sting Me", "Morning Song" and then spontaneously combust into the jamming "I Wish I Had A Wooden Nickel For Every Pencil She Tried To Sell Me", a strutting shuffle that rode sure-footed on drummer Steve Gorman's rock-solid beat.

Such is the Crowes' confidence that two new songs are paraded, the acoustic lament of "Non Fiction" and the yearning, powerful "Thunderstorm 6.45pm". Both are as well received as the lugubrious "A Thorn In My Pride" and the monstrous "Hotel Illness", "our only folk song", jests the elder Robinson.

Meanwhile kid brother and straight-man Rich Robinson is laying down some deft slide guitar, as new guitarist Marc Ford digs into his personal nether zone to dredge out those mind-reeling solos.

Never ones to be limited by convention, the familiar spaghetti maze of a lighting rig is dispensed with in favour of nets bearing huge Christmas tree baubles. The blaze of multi-coloured lights creates the impression of 100 psychedelic stars - what drug did they say they were on?!

The potent "Remedy" closes the set, leaving the capacity crowd baying for more as the house lights interrupt their reverie. The Black Crowes' brew is heady indeed!

ANDY MARTIN

THE BLACK CROWES RICH ROBINSON: STRAIGHT GUY

thought the flame had gone out 'neath their simmering pot! Tonight, faced with an appalling sound and a reticent crowd, they triumphed. But one has to wonder if anyone really cared!

Cerebral Fix have a got a new album in these shops. "Death Erotica". Their best album to date. And the tracks from the record (including "Mind Within Mine", "Angel's Kiss" and the potentially epic "Creator Of Outcasts") stood out as deserving far more than a lukewarm response. Honestly, what do vocalist Simon Forrest, guitarists Gregg Fellows/Tony Warburton, bassist Frank Healy and drummer Kevin Frost have to do to get any form of recognition in the UK?

In the meantime, Halifax quintet Paradise Lost continue to grow in terms of popularity. However, I've got to say that despite a packed club heaving in joyous abandon at the sounds from onstage, personally I found the performance a shade disappointing. In essence, Paradise Lost are a slick metal combo trying hard still to remember their rough'n'ready roots. It doesn't really work. Look, this is a fine band, with vocalist Nick Holmes and guitarists Gregor Mackintosh/Aaron Aedy particularly charismatic. But somehow, it all goes wrong. Maybe that's because I prefer the doom days of the "Lost Paradise" and "Gothic" albums to the present-day sophistication of the "Shades Of God" album.

Overall? I dunno, I just didn't *enjoy* Paradise Lost tonight. But I *was* in a minority. And whatever my reservations, good luck to 'em!

MIKE MERCURY

THE WISHPLANTS

Bull & Gate, Kentish Town, London

It's an inhospitable Saturday night. The Black Crowes have packed out Brixton Academy. Paradise Lost have shoehorned 'em into The Marquee. But here I am, out with a thin crowd at a North West London pub. And I think I've ended up with the best deal of all!

The Wishplants come from Northamptonshire. They're a four-piece with a fiercely noisy centre that brushes firmly into The Toll, X, Jane's Addiction, Helmet and U2. They are excellent, one of the best young British bands I've seen a long while.

Led by restive vocalist Saul Denton (who spends all of his time in motion, barely able to contain a natural energy) and phenomenal guitarist Ed Gilmour (Hendrix, The Edge, Fred 'Sonic' Smith, Richard Hell influences, stripped bare and then sent smouldering in a well of nitric acid), this band were indeed charismatic. Bassist Wolfie and drummer Fritz were competent time-pieces, allowing the main duo to explore such tunes as "Captain Marvel" (impenetrable wall of fuzz), "Lucky Me" (an epic of perverse emotional discharges), "Move Around" (dance rhythms for hyperactive industrial machinery) and "Misery" (sombre shadows).

More redolent of the late, lamented Toll than anybody else, The Wishplants are gonna make an impact - precisely because they have no preconceptions.

Note the name.

MALCOLM DOME

T-RIDE

The Borderline, London

This is a toughie. T-Ride's self-titled, debut album is without a doubt the finest moment of 1992. But with its multi-layered Queen-style harmonies and immaculate musicianship, this Californian-based trio had an

MINISTRY'S AL JOURGENSEN AND A FEW FRIENDS

Ministry pics: George Chin

MINISTRY

Brixton Academy, London

It was absolutely heaving. I mean, there was just no room whatsoever. And outside tickets were going for at least £40 a piece! Testament to the massive wave of popularity currently being ridden by one of America's more intriguing outfits. And tonight Ministry justified the tremendous buzz surrounding their first ever UK dates.

It was, without wanting to put too fine a point on it, an outstanding show. A visual and aural battering of frightening intensity that pulled no punches and left many stunned.

Three guitarists (including ex-Mind Funker Louis Svitek and mainman Al Jourgensen) herald the arrival of "NWO" and the power knocks you back off your feet. Senses scream as images flash by on a huge screen like some acid-induced nightmare - you know, penis removal, eyeball operations, that kind of thing! Ministry go the whole hog, despite being denied the fence they're known to perform behind and with Jourgensen minus his microbone stand, and it's an experience I wouldn't have missed for the world.

Surprisingly, Ministry live are easier to grab a hold of than they are on album. It's no less intense, how can it be with a thousand visual images flying at you every minute battling for your attention against the massive wall of sound that the band throw at you? It's just, I dunno, a little more melodic. A little easier to understand, maybe. Whatever, the sea of people in front of me are just going with the flow like thousands of E-crazed ravers.

They blast through 1000 Homo DJ's cover of Sabbath's "Supernaut", and the place goes even crazier, if that can be imagined. Chris Connelly appears for a spellbinding "So What". He leads them through "TV Song". He's a high point on a night of high points.

As if to ram home their own perverted ideologies they don't play "Jesus Built My Hotrod" and leave the crowd baying before returning for encores, that end with repetitive taped music. Ministry have left the building, taking their own slice of hell with them.

Indeed hell came to Brixton for one brief night, but with Ministry along for the ride, hell ain't a bad place to be!

EUGENE SCRIBES

OZZY OSBOURNE/ BLACK SABBATH/ SEPULTURA

Pacific Amphitheater, Costa Mesa, California

OZZY OSBOURNE: NEXT STOP 1974!

You gotta love Los Angeles traffic! Thanks to the 405 Freeway being turned in the world's largest car park, I missed Sepultura. I heard they were good.

Whatever the truth behind Ronnie James Dio electing not to participate in tonight and last night's shows, Black Sabbath rolled on in true Spinal Tap fashion by selecting a 'special guest singer' to play with. The choice was fellow Birmingham native Rob Halford, late of Judas Priest, currently with Fight (and, in the future, back with Priest again?). Decked out completely in black leather, including a long overcoat, Halford debuted his new hairstyle - a completely shaved head!

A week of rehearsals resulted in Halford being a remarkably good choice. I guess none of his many predecessors were available - where are you, Dave Walker? In all seriousness, Halford was brilliant - keeping his voice in his lower register for the most part - and the line-up of guitarist Tony Iommi, bassist Geezer Butler, keyboardsman Geoff Nichols and drummer Vinnie Appice stormed through "Mob Rules" and "Neon Knights" with nary a pause. "Children Of The Grave" and "Die Young" preceded the only Halford miscue of the night, namely an early vocal entry into "Symptom Of The Universe". But I've heard more mistakes from his Sabbath cronies in the past than is understandable, and "N.I.B.", "Children Of The Sea", "Heaven & Hell" and "Sweet Leaf" were all flawless.

But were they Sabbath? Not in a million years! An enjoyable performance, but ultimately an irrelevant and unnecessary one. Halford closed by mentioning that "despite any rumours you may have heard, Rob Halford will be back and so will the Priest".

If tonight was indeed Ozzy's final performance as a solo artist, he didn't go out on a great note. A damn good one, to be sure, but not a *brilliant* one. Looking and sounding a bit weary, the Great Oz opened with "Paranoid" and ran through all the tunes that you'd expect. Bringing out his three children, thanking his band, his fans and anyone else he could think of, Ozzy allowed drummer Randy Castillo, guitarist Zakk Wylde and bassist Mike Inez liberal amounts of the spotlight and was enthusiastic in his professions of gratitude to all involved. Ozzy spent his usual amount of time throwing buckets of water on the crowd, inciting them to craziness and behaving like the man we all know and love!

With the video screens providing great views of the entire band, the night rolled on quickly. "I Don't Know", "Desire", "I Don't Want To Change The World", "Mr. Crowley", "Road To Nowhere", "Flyin' High Again", "Suicide Solution", "Goodbye To Romance", "Shot In The Dark", "Bark At The Moon" and "War Pigs" followed the opener. Zakk soloed somewhere in there, Randy soloed as well, and the set culminated in the encores of "Mama I'm Coming Home" and "Crazy Train".

Waving goodbye for what is supposed to be the final time in these circumstances, John Osbourne walked off to a thunderous ovation, but not a body left the place. And eventually...

Wearing his trademark fringed jacket, Ozzy bounded onstage with Geezer and Tony in tow. Drummer Bill Ward positioned himself on the backline and the reunited classic Sabbath line-up dirged into "Black Sabbath". With the calendar turned from 1992 to somewhere around 1974, "Fairies Wear Boots" was the next selection - and brilliant it was too! The sell-out crowd sang every word, so the fact that Ozzy was a bit weary vocally didn't matter a bit. Tonight was heaven for a sea of punters, most of whom probably weren't even born when the first Sabbath album was recorded!

Iommi has shamed himself and the Sabbath name with a succession of singers, but when "Iron Man" came chugging out next and a pandemonium fan reaction ensued, the smile on Tony's face spoke more than any words. If Sabbath is to venture forth again, it will have to be these four and all involved know it. The only way to top "Iron Man" was to air "Paranoid" and that they did. Sheer ecstacy and the perfect closing to a night of history. A round of bows, a bunch of hugs and four huge smiles ended the night and the audience cheering didn't cease for a good five minutes after the band had left the stage.

So, were there any clues to the future of Ozzy and Sabbath? A fireworks explosion illuminated an Ozzy-logo-styled design that read simple *I'll Be Back*. In what form is subject to speculation, but I'm betting on the obvious.

BRIAN BRANDES BRINKERHOFF

impossible task on their hands to reproduce it live and, to be honest, I left with mixed feelings.

Things started off badly with sound problems during opener "Zombies From Hell", which due to lack of live experience vocalist/bassist Dan Arlie failed to make amends for. At times, things became erratic. But the guys put on a brave face. What they lacked in crowd communication, they made up for with 'modesty'. For example, prior to the instrumental extravaganza "Bone Down", guitarist Jeff Tyson was introduced as "The best guitarist in the world".

The guys ran through most of the album coming across like a grunge band with harmonies and superior musicianship, which is not what the album is all about. "You And Your Friend" and "Heroes And Villains" came across the best live being injected with a Power Boost From Hell by comparison with their commercial album versions.

T-Ride have so much potential and individuality and it's gonna take a helluva lot of work. But it will be done. I think they will work better in bigger venues with better technology. Despite all my criticisms, their originality shone through.

KELV HELLRAZER

LILLIAN AXE

The Marquee, London

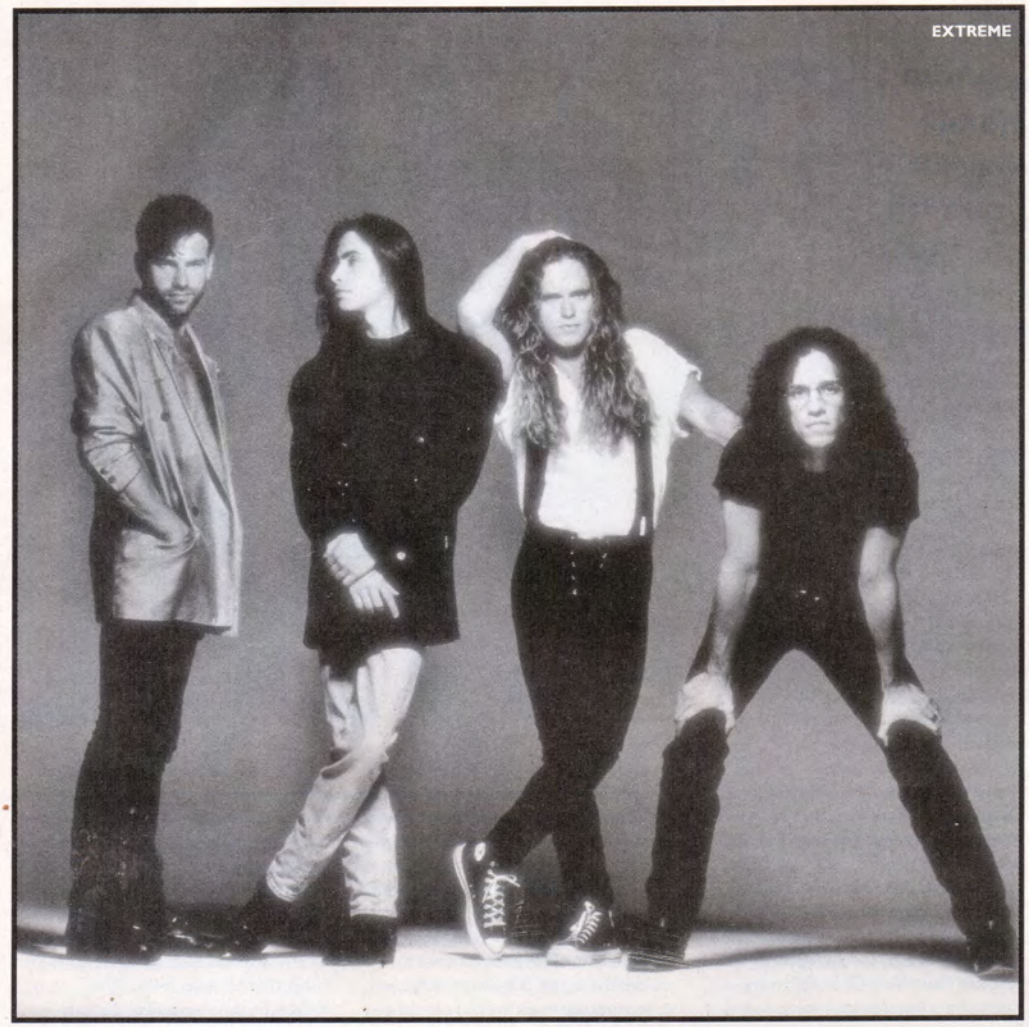
I've always known about Lillian Axe being able to entertain. Their reputation has preceded them on many occasions. I've been in the States many a time and just missed them and heard that they *wailed*. Well, after two cancelled visits here, they finally made it over and they kicked serious amounts of butt, despite a godawful sound!

Vocalist Ron Taylor is a natural and he took the band through the finest moments of their repertoire, including "Misery", "True Believer", a cover of Girl's "My Number", "Innocence" and "Body Double". We could have done without new sticksman Tommy Stewart's drum solo, though. No offence, Tommy, but drum solos are history! Guitarist Stevie Blaze and bassist Darren Delatte, meantime, really worked the crowd like I haven't seen in ages.

The real *raison d'etre* came with "All's Fair In Love And War", which had the crowd rocking like there was no tomorrow. Shame about the sound, but you can't keep a good band down. Thumbs up, guys!

KELV HELLRAZER

tour news


EXTREME

■ **EXTREME** play Cardiff National Ice Rink December 17, Bournemouth International Centre 19, Birmingham NEC 21, London Wembley Arena 22/23.

Support act are **HARDLINE**.

■ **JOE SATRIANI** plays Edinburgh Playhouse February 1, Newcastle-Upon-Tyne City Hall 2, Manchester Apollo 3, London Hammersmith Apollo 4.

Tickets are priced at £11.50 for all dates, except in London where they are £13.50.

■ **MARSHALL LAW** play Milton Keynes Woughton Centre on December 18.

The band will issue a new album titled "Powergame" early next year. It was co-produced by Robin George.

■ **BON JOVI** will undertake a major UK tour next year. The full list of dates are: Birmingham NEC Arena May 10/11/12, London Wembley Arena 14/15/16, Sheffield Arena 18, Glasgow SE&CC 19.

Tickets are priced at £17.50/£15 for all shows, except Glasgow, where they are £16.50/£15.

■ **FM** head back on the road for another round of acoustic shows. They play Buckley Tivoli December 17, Liverpool Krazy House 18, Birkenhead Stairways 19, London Roadhouse 21, Burnley Mechanics 22.

■ **STATUS QUO** will play Manchester G-Mex December 17, London Wembley Arena 19/20.

Support act are **FIREHOUSE**.

■ **THE RAMONES** play Glasgow Barrowlands December 17, Manchester The Academy 18, London Kentish Town Town & Country Club 19, London Brixton Academy 20.

Support act for all dates will be **TERRORVISION**, who also headline their own show at Bradford Queens Hall on December 22.

■ **DEICIDE** play London Astoria Theatre on December 17. Support acts will be **ATROCITY** and **GOREFEST**.

■ **SUGAR** play Cardiff University on December 17.

■ **WRAITH** play Kidderminster Market Tavern December 18, Nottingham Bobby Browns 21, Blackpool Tache 23, Oxford Stocks January 2.

■ **UK SUBS** play Aston-Under-Lyne Witchwood December 17, Leicester Princess Charlotte 20, Derby Warehouse 21, Nottingham Rock City 22.

■ **MOTÖRHEAD** play a special Christmas show at London Hammersmith Apollo on December 23. Expect more UK dates in February.

■ **MY DYING BRIDE**, **ANATHEMA**, **DECOMPOSED**, **CRADLE OF FILTH**, **SOLSTICE**, **MAIM**, **INCARCERATED** and **THE REIGN** play London Tufnell Park The Dome on December 19. Festivities begin at 3pm.

■ **THERAPY?** play Dublin SFX December 20, Belfast Ulster Hall 21.

■ **STRONGHEART**, an American trio based in Australia, play Sheffield Non-Pots Club December 17, Hull Quigley's 21, Derby Duke Of York 23, Scunthorpe Pickwicks 28, Tamworth Rockwells January 7, Boston Axe & Cleaner 9, Hartlepool Blackhall Naval 22, York Fibbers 23.

■ **FISH** will play Manchester Academy February 21, London Kentish Town Town & Country Club 22/23, Bristol Colston Hall 25, Cambridge Corn Exchange 26, Guildford Civic Hall 27.

■ **TARRASQUE** play Cardiff Bogiez December 18 (supporting **SKYCLAD**), Portsmouth Guildhall 23 (with **THE CRANES**, **SKAW** and **FIREWORK PARTY**), Portsmouth Air Balloon 24, Southampton Boogies 31.

■ **ORIGINAL SIN** play London Walthamstow Royal Standard on January 10.

■ **IZZY STRADLIN & THE JU JU HOUNDS** play Belfast Mandela Hall December 17, Dublin Tivoli Theatre 18.

Support act will be **THE WILD-HEARTS**.

■ **LAWNMOWER DETH** play Nottingham Rock City on December 19. They will be joined on the bill by **DOCTOR & THE MEDICS**, **PEG**, **NOSFERATU** and **LUDICROUS LOLLIPOPS**.

■ **MAGGIE BELL** and **CHRIS FARLOW**, two blasts from the past, play Glasgow The Cathouse on December 17.

■ **BAD COMPANY** play London Kentish Town, Town and Country Club on February 20.

■ **THE SCOTTISH SEX PISTOLS** play Glasgow The Cathouse on December 27.

■ **U2** play Glasgow Celtic Park August 7, London Wembley Stadium 11/12, Leeds Roundhay Park 14, Cardiff Arms Park 18.

■ **SILVERFISH** will be appearing at London Clapham Grand December 17, Dublin SFX 20, Belfast Ulster Hall 21. The last two dates are supporting **THERAPY?**.

■ **SKYCLAD** play Cardiff Bogiez December 18, London Marquee Club 20.

■ **MAGNUM** play a special Christmas show at Birmingham Town Hall on December 22.

STRONGHEART

demo-lition

Send your demo tapes/CDs to:
Demo-lition, MF, 40 Langham Street, London W1N 5RG, England.
We endeavour to review all demos sent in. And, please note that if you wish to have a photo used in this column, ensure that it is a good quality *black & white print!*

QUILL

We tend to overlook unsigned British bands these days, right? If a demo's American, then automatically it is regarded as being of a higher standard than the UK equivalent. This has much to do with the presentation of said tape, rather than its musical merits. Thus, a number of promising young Brit acts are overlooked. A shame, because in the process some fine music is cast aside. For instance, there's Suffolk's **Inner Sanctum**.

Formed in 1988, the first line-up (featuring only vocalist John Knight and guitarist Ian Knight from the present incarnation), recorded a demo titled "Fear Is Life's Blood" in '89, before settling on their current formation, the Knight brothers being joined by Jed Hawkins (drums), Iain Leith (guitar) and Kev Jackson (bass). On their current demo, "Static Veins", the band display a mature yet powerful metallic touch. Thrash with intelligence. Support slots with the likes of Skyclad, Dead On and Atom Seed show Inner Sanctum's diversity, and the aforementioned three-track tape suggests a band with enormous potential.

Over in Los Angeles, **Soul** display a rare vitality and artistry on their five-track demo. Already signed to World's End/Chappel Music for publishing, guitarist Stef Jillian, vocalist Kevin Roentgen, bassist/vocalist Tristan Greth and drummer/vocalist Kenny Pierce have a sound that draws from across the board. Their tape (produced by Joe Hardy, who has worked with ZZ Top and The Georgia Satellites) hints at Lynyrd Skynyrd, Otis Redding, Van Halen, Aerosmith, The Georgia Satellites and early REO Speedwagon. Expect great things from 'em.

Despite the overcrowding of the death metal genre, I rather feel that Dutch sextet **Phlebotomized** offer something virally tenacious and cruelly fresh on their six-tracker "Devoted To God". Proferring pneumatic power and bubonic bombast, guitarists Jordy Middelbosch/Tom Palms, vocalist Barry Schuyer, keyboardsman Ben Quak, bassist Patrick van der Zee and drummer Lawrence Payne put many more celebrated deathsters to shame. Formed in 1990 under the name Bacterial Disease, this mob should be given the chance to infect all and sundry.

Back in the UK, Oxfordshire four-piece **Damage** are traditional power metallurgists in existence for less than two years. But bassist/vocalist Michael Gilpin, guitarist Steve Warner, rhythm guitarist Ady Wear and drummer Westley King defy such inexperience on their three-track demo "Mad Age", suggesting elements of Motörhead, Budgie, Saxon, Tygers Of Pan Tang and New Wave Of British Heavy Metal heroes Jaguar in their steely sound. Perhaps a little too blue collar for their own good, if Damage can add a touch of flamboyance to grit and work-rate, they could go places.

Canadian trio **Neurodelirium** offer up another rampant slice of primitive death metal fare on their three-track demo "Delirogenic Morbidity". Guitarist/vocalist Richard Bérubé, bassist/vocalist Jéróme Fortin and drummer Dominic Dubé throw out hints of fellow Quebecians VoiVod, as well as Painkiller, Napalm Death, Death and Deicide in an amalgam that is raw, savage and cannibalistic in its habits. Not for the squeamish, nor those who enjoy the fine art of subtlety. But it certainly appeals to me.

Back in Oxfordshire, hotly tipped doomsters **Sevenchurch** continue to explore the depths of their art with a two-track demo that might well be a prelude to a recording deal. Vocalist Martin Spear, lead guitarist David Smart, rhythm guitarist Dave Capel, bassist Ollie and drummer Graeme Bastable have a rare ability to play slow, mournful music as if it comes to them naturally rather than sounding as if they're jumping on a bandwagon. Makes for compulsive, if sedentary, listening.

From the bowels of Australia come **Damaged**, a fivesome formed back in June '91 and displaying on their five-track demo "The Art Of Destroying Life" a capacity for noisecore infestation that owes much to happy days in the garage with the windows blacked out and carbon monoxide cocktails. Vocalist Jamie Ludbrook, guitarists Matt Silcock/Chris Hill, bassist Jason Parker and drummer Matt Sanders waste no time on gentility, eviscerating their songs in the fashion of true malcontents. This Melbourne band are probably a feast onstage, but in the studio much of their energy is dissipated by a tendency towards the generic. Still, proof that Australia *can* offer something more than sub-AC/DC clones.

Kettering's **Fluid Groove** openly avow influences from Alice In Chains, Mother Love Bone and Pearl Jam. And their three-track demo (mixed, incidentally, by Enid mainman Robert John Godfrey) is so redolent of Seattle grunge gulch that vocalist Adam Mills, guitarists Jason Mills/John Buttars, bassist 'Mole' and drummer Chris White could hardly deny their roots. But barely a year old, Fluid Groove do have undeniable talent. Given the time to develop away from demands and expectations, they may well invest their music with the individuality and flair it will need to survive. Promising.

New Hampshire band **Vigilance** have much, it would seem, in common with Anthrax. Their style on recent, seven-track demo "Unveiling The Imminent" (their second tape) has hints of thrash and power metal allied to a rap flavour. Vocalist/guitarist Shane Watkins, guitarist Dave French (he recently replaced Keith Demanche, who appears on the tape), bassist/backing vocalist Steve Boisvert and drummer Jeff Boutin are proficient and, at times, exciting musicians who provide a clear and well-constructed approach. What they lack is the spark of inspiration to go with their efficient composure. Only two years old as a band, they have time on their side and should use it to develop the more interest-

RADAKKA

demo-lition

BAY OF PIGS

ing aspects of their talents, which lie in those power metal nuances hinting at early Iron Maiden and Vicious Rumors.

Haywards Heath five-piece **Empyr** reflect a melodic hard rock approach that is altogether pleasant, yet conversely facile. Suggesting Shy, Tobruk and a myriad other UK melodic rock bands who offered initial, but ultimately unfulfilled potential. The problem with guitarist/vocalist Rob Comber, guitarist/backing vocalist Craig Summers, bassist/backing vocalist Chris Bloomfield, keyboardsman/backing vocalist Simon Carter and drummer/backing vocalist Andy Ward is that, on their 12-track demo "Playing With Fire", they lack any sense of perspiration and inspiration to go with their delicate poise. Now two years old, Empyr will have to radically improve on the fare displayed here to make anything other than a minor, localised impact.

Argentinian thrashers **Abaxial** are genereic in the extreme, influenced by the likes of Slayer, Kreator, Dark Angel and early Exodus. However, on their five-track demo "Neo-Drama", bassist/vocalist Gustavo Esnaola, guitarists Alberto Armagno/Mario Mendez and drummer Horacio Herrera display a rare enthusiasm for their craft that strangely transcends a tendency towards imitation. I would scarce suggest that Abaxial will do for Argentinian thrash what Sepultura did for the Brazilian scene, but one never knows!

New York's **Sintillion** have similar roots to those of Abaxial, the difference being that four years of live experience gives their self-titled three-tracker are venomous edge. Support slots with the likes of Pantera and Suicidal Tendencies have provided vocalist James Gibbons, guitarists Kurt Remppel/Steve Scheluchin, bassist Brian McKean and drummer Kenny Braun with a real fire that literally ignites material such as "No Better Than Yesterday" and "Separation Of One". A band with a future in furore.

Strangely old-fashioned in many respects, Swedish band **Quill** offer on their self-titled, five-track demo a richly patterned sound that is redolent of Gillan, Uriah Heep, early Europe and UFO. Yet vocalist Magnus Ekwall, guitarist Christian Carlsson, organist Anders Haglund, bassist Peter Holm and drummer George Atlagic eshew the dangers of becoming retro-rock bores thanks to the ebullience and virtuosity of their artistry and a song canon that is flowing with tuneful confidence and tight-fisted largess. Together for three years, I think this band could be a sensation if they're given the right breaks.

Again offering a traditional rock perspective, New York quartet **Bay Of Pigs** have varied influences, ranging from The Velvet Underground to The Doors, picking up on Ozzy-era Sabbath and Blue Cheer along the way. It all makes for a sound that is as atmospheric as anything to come out of Seattle, yet possessed of an almost acidic underbelly of musical turbulence. Vocalist Wayne M. Christie, guitarist/vocalist Robert DeForge, bassist/vocalist Anthony Deane and drummer Chip Rainone display on their self-titled, three-track demo a real penchant for the sort of dynamics which made Masters Of Reality such a treasured band a couple of years back. A heavy, sonorous sound that bites deep, yet is conversely soothing.

Sweden's **Switchblade** are yet another very obvious melodic hard rock band. Yet I can't help but like 'em. Sure, the vocals of Jay Sharon (who also shares guitar duties with Fredrick Norsbo; the line-up is completed by bassist/backing vocalist Jake Roxx and drummer Mikki Whyte) are strained and tepid, but musically (as shown on the four-tracker "Back For More") this Malmö-based act do have strong ideas. Taking their cue from influences like UFO, Magnum, Asia and FM, the band do write highly melodic tomes, spoilt only by a poor standard of singing. If Switchblade can find a suitable vocalist to carry forward their ideas, then they might well be AOR heroes. Watch out for a self-financed, six-track CD, due out in the Spring.

Chicago foursome **Radakka** already have their style nailed down, as evinced on the five-track demo "Masquerade". Vocalist/guitarist Josh Dobbs, bassist/vocalist Randy Jostes, guitarist/keyboardsman/vocalist Michael Pesch and drummer/vocalist Dean Maltese mix'n'match power metal in the vein of early Metal Church, Vicious Rumors and Queensrÿche with stunning vocal harmonies that remind me of "Cornerstone"-era Styx and current T-Ride. Imagine rust-resistant riffs, fibrous rhythms, coaxing vocals and melodic fire and you have Radakka. Simply magnificent.

MALCOLM DOME

SINTILLION

If you want further information on this month's bands, then write to:

Inner Sanctum: Karen Gooch, 120 Somerton Avenue, Lowestoft, Suffolk, England.

Soul: World's End (America) Inc., 183 N. Martel Avenue, Suite # 270, Los Angeles, California 90036, USA.

Phlebotomized: The Phlebotomized Brotherhood, Ottersveen 128, 3205 VG Spijkenisse, The Netherlands. Copies of the "Devoted To God" demo are available at a price of £3 plus an SAE/£4 direct to Giro a/c no. 6329688/$6 + IRC.

Damage: Michael Gilpin, 27 Clapcot Way, Wallingford, Oxon OX10 8HS, England.

Neurodelirium: Richard Bérubé, 2407 du Foulon, Sillery, Quebec, GIT 1X6, Canada.

Sevenchurch: David Smart, 83 Hurst Rise Road, Botley, Oxford OX2 9HF, England.

Damaged: Nick Wheelhouse, Rancid Box Management, Girl's Toilet Records, Great Britain Hotel, 447 Church Street, Richmond, Vic. 3121, Australia.

Fluid Groove: Paul Stratford, 86 Broadway, Kettering, Northants, NN15 6DF, England. Copies of the "Fluid Groove" tape are available at a price of £2.

Vigilance: Shane Watkins, 7 Rainbow Avenue, Merrimack, NH 03054, USA.

Empyr: Chris Bloomfield, 2 Walstead Manor Cottages, Walstead, Lindfield, West Sussex RH16 2QG, England.

Abaxial: José Bonifacio 103, 1 "C" Buenos Aires, Argentina. Copies of the "Neo-Drama" tape are available at a price of $10 (US/South America)/$11 (elsewhere).

Sintillion: Nemesis Music Ltd., 30 Maple Avenue, Suite # B2, Eastchester, NY 10701, USA.

Quill: Quill Production HB, Storgatan 18, S-38300 Mtnsteras, Sweden.

Bay Of Pigs: PO Box 379, S.I., N.Y. 10314, USA.

Switchblade: J. Karlsson, Ystadvsgen 36, 4 Vsn, 214 45 Malmt, Sweden.

Radakka: PO Box 30262, Chicago, Illinois 60630, USA. Copies of the "Masquerade" tape are available at a price of $10.

THE MF WRITERS' TOP

This is what we liked in '92, everything from Cannibal Corpse to Richard Marx and Black Crowes to Magnum. Enjoy...

BRIAN BRANDES BRINKERHOFF

1 - **DREAM THEATRE** - Images & Words
2 - **ALICE IN CHAINS** - Dirt
3 - **EXTREME** - III Sides To Every Story
4 - **RAGE AGINST THE MACHINE** - Rage Against The Machine
5 - **T-RIDE** - T-Ride
6 - **PANTERA** - Vulgar Display Of Power
7 - **BLACK CROWES** - The Southern Harmony And Musical Companion
8 - **FM** - Aphrodisiac
9 - **PAT TRAVERS** - Blues Tracks
10- **SOPHIE B. HAWKINS** - Tongues And Tails
11- **BAD COMPANY** - Here Comes Trouble
12- **TOTAL ECLIPSE** - Total Eclipse
13- **WIDOWMAKER** - Blood & Bullets
14- **MOTHER'S FINEST** - Black Radio Won't Play This Record
15- **MAGNUM** - Sleepwalking
16- **JUDE COLE** - Start The Car
17- **RHINO BUCKET** - Get Used To It
18- **SASS JORDAN** - Racine
19- **FLAME** - Flame
20- **ELECTRIC BOYS** - Groovus Maximus

BERNARD DOE

1 - **BODYCOUNT** - Bodycount
2 - **SKATENIGS** - Stupid People Shouldn't Breed
3 - **SUICIDAL TENDENCIES** - The Art Of Rebellion
4 - **MEGADETH** - Countdown To Extinction
5 - **DREAM THEATRE** - Images & Words
6 - **MASQUERADE** - Masquerade
7 - **MINISTRY** - Psalm 69
8 - **HELMET** - Meantime
9 - **PANTERA** - Vulgar Display Of Power
10- **PRO-PAIN** - Foul Taste Of Freedom
11- **THERAPY?** - Nurse
12- **HEAVY BONES** - Heavy Bones
13- **SAIGON KICK** - The Lizard
14- **ALICE IN CHAINS** - Dirt
15- **WARRIOR SOUL** - Salutations From The Ghetto Nation
16- **KYUSS** - Blues For The Red Sun
17- **SILVERFISH** - Organ Fan
18- **SATOR** - Headquake
19- **FAITH NO MORE** - Angel Dust
20- **TIAMAT** - Clouds

MALCOLM DOME

1 - **NEIL YOUNG** - Harvest Moon
2 - **SOLITUDE AETURNUS** - Beyond The Crimson Horizon
3 - **EYEHATEGOD** - In The Name Of Suffering
4 - **BON JOVI** - Keep The Faith
5 - **TROUBLE** - Manic Frustration
6 - **SCORN** - Vae Solis
7 - **MONSTER MAGNET** - Spine Of God
8 - **NAKED CITY** - Heretic
9 - **CROWBAR** - Obedience Thru Suffering
10- **OPTIMUM WOUND PROFILE** - Lowest Common Dominator
11- **DEICIDE** - Legion
12- **FIONA** - Squeeze
13- **MAGNUM** - Sleepwalking
14- **MARTY FRIEDMAN** - Scenes
15- **CANNIBAL CORPSE** - Tomb Of The Mutilated
16- **MY DYING BRIDE** - As The Flower Withers
17- **DAN BAIRD** - Love Songs For The Hearing Impaired
18- **ASIA** - Aqua
19- **MINISTRY** - Psalm 69
20- **PAINKILLER** - Buried Secrets

JERRY EWING

1 - **NEIL YOUNG** - Harvest Moon
2 - **EMF** - Stigma
3 - **CHRIS CONNELLY** - Phenobarb Bam Ba Lam
4 - **PEARL JAM** - Ten
5 - **INSPIRAL CARPETS** - Revenge Of The Goldfish
6 - **ALICE IN CHAINS** - Dirt
7 - **FAITH NO MORE** - Angel Dust
8 - **SUGAR** - Copper Blue
9 - **REM** - Automatic For The People
10- **TROUBLE** - Manic Frustration
11- **DEF LEPPARD** - Adrenalize
12- **THE ORB** - UFOrb
13- **ELECTRIC BOYS** - Groovus Maximus
14- **THE RAMONES** - Mondo Bizarro
15- **THE JAYHAWKS** - Hollywood Town Hall
16- **BLACK CROWES** - The Southern Harmony And Musical Companion
17- **NED'S ATOMIC DUSTBIN** - Are You Normal?
18- **TESTAMENT** - The Ritual
19- **ARC ANGELS** - Arc Angels
20- **CARTER U.S.M.** - 1992: The Love Album

KELV HELLRAZER

1 - **T-RIDE** - T-Ride
2 - **LYNN ALLEN** - Lynn Allen
3 - **MANIC STREET PREACHERS** - Generation Terrorists
4 - **BIG BANG BABIES** - Big Bang Babies
5 - **ROADMASTER** - Live Plus 5
6 - **RICHARD MARX** - Rush Street
7 - **MOTHER'S FINEST** - Black Radio Won't Play This Record
8 - **LILLIAN AXE** - Poetic Justice
9 - **WALL OF SILENCE** - Shock To The System
10- **FARRCRY** - Mister Red, White, Blue
11- **TOTO** - Kingdom Of Desire
12- **MITCH MOLLOY** - Mitch Molloy
13- **CAT'S CHOIR** - House Of Dog
14- **FLAME** - Flame
15- **LIX ARRAY** - Reality Playground
16- **KK WILDE** - Rock'n'Roll
17- **WANTED** - Wanted
18- **THE BEAUTIES** - The Beauties
19- **PARIAH** - Make Believe
20- **WARRANT** - Dog Eat Dog

ANDY MARTIN

1 - **BLACK CROWES** - The Southern Harmony And Musical Companion
2 - **PEARL JAM** - Ten
3 - **DANZIG** - How The Gods Kill
4 - **POP'S COOL LOVE** - Pop's Cool Love
5 - **MONSTER MAGNET** - Spine Of God
6 - **MATTHEW SWEET** - Girlfriend
7 - **IZZY STRADLIN** - Ju Ju Hounds
8 - **KEITH RICHARDS** - Main Offender
9 - **LITTLE CAESAR** - Influence
10- **AC/DC** - Live
11- **RON WOOD** - Slide On This
12- **FAITH NO MORE** - Angel Dust
13- **LOVE/HATE** - Wasted In America
14- **BON JOVI** - Keep The Faith
15- **THUNDER** - Laughing On Judgement Day
16- **MY SISTER'S MACHINE** - Diva
17- **ELECTRIC BOYS** - Groovus Maximus
18- **W.A.S.P.** - The Crimson Idol
19- **TROUBLE** - Manic Frustration
20- **ARC ANGELS** - Arc Angels

BRIAN O'NEILL

1 - **MINISTRY** - Psalm 69
2 - **BEASTIE BOYS** - Check Your Head
3 - **NINE INCH NAILS** - Broken
4 - **TROUBLE** - Manic Frustration
5 - **PARADISE LOST** - Shades Of God
6 - **ALICE IN CHAINS** - Dirt
7 - **SUPERSUCKERS** - Smoke Of Hell
8 - **WHITE ZOMBIE** - La Sexorcisto: Devil Music Vol. I
9 - **BLACK CROWES** - The Southern Harmony And Musical Companion
10- **BRUTAL TRUTH** - Extreme Measures Demand Extreme Responses
11- **ICE CUBE** - Death Certificate
12- **HELMET** - Meantime
13- **SOUL ASYLUM** - Grave Dancers
14- **SAIGON KICK** - The Lizard
15- **BAD RELIGION** - Generator
16- **ARRESTED DEVELOPMENT** - 3 Years, 5 Months & 2 Days In The Life Of...
17- **PANTERA** - Vulgar Display Of Power
18- **PETER GABRIEL** - Us
19- **THUD** - Life & Death
20- **BABES IN TOYLAND** - Fontanelle

ALBUMS OF THE YEAR

CHERYL SMITH

1 - **EXTREME** - III Sides To Every Story
2 - **KISS OF THE GYPSY** - Kiss Of The Gypsy
3 - **MICHAEL KATON** - Get On The Boogie Machine
4 - **SAIGON KICK** - The Lizard
5 - **TESTAMENT** - The Ritual
6 - **GIANT** - Time To Burn
7 - **UNRULY CHILD** - Unruly Child
8 - **PRINCE & THE NEW POWER GENERATION** - MF
9 - **KISS** - Revenge
10- **BON JOVI** - Keep The Faith
11- **MEGADETH** - Countdown To Extinction
12- **DANZIG** - How The Gods Kill
13- **BABY ANIMALS** - Baby Animals
14- **THE WILDHEARTS** - Don't Be Happy... Just Worry
15- **ELECTRIC BOYS** - Groovus Maximus
16- **FASTER PUSSYCAT** - Whipped
17- **BONHAM** - Madhatter
18- **L7** - Bricks Are Heavy
19- **TROUBLE** - Manic Frustration
20- **W.A.S.P.** - The Crimson Idol

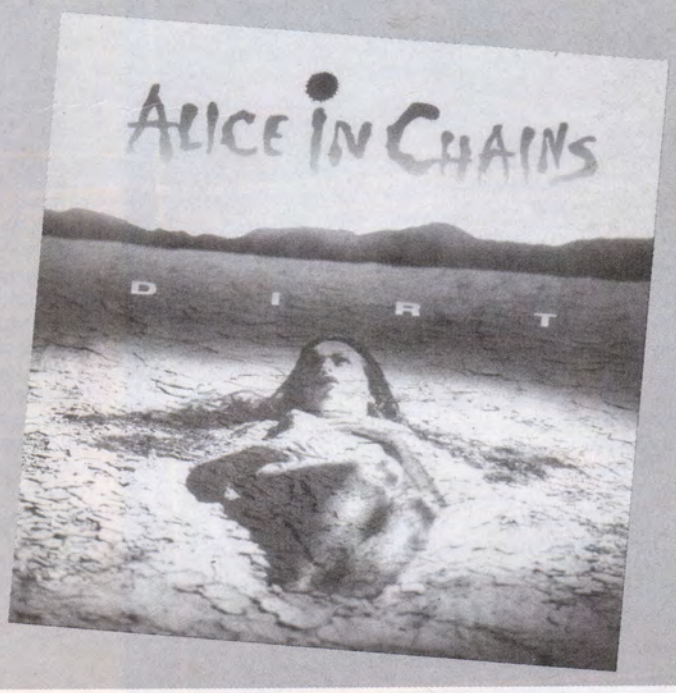
DENISE STILLIE

1 - **TOM WAITS** Bone Machine
2 - **ROLLINS BAND** - End Of Silence
3 - **MINISTRY** - Psalm 69
4 - **NICK CAVE & THE BAD SEEDS** - Henry's Dream
5 - **MONSTER MAGNET** - Spine Of God
6 - **PEARL JAM** - Ten
7 - **SCREAMING TREES** - Sweet Oblivion
8 - **FAITH NO MORE** - Angel Dust
9 - **HELMET** - Meantime
10- **GRUNTRUCK** - Push
11- **REM** - Automatic For The People
12- **CORROSION OF CONFORMITY** - Blind
13- **MUDHONEY** - Piece Of Cake
14- **THE GOD MACHINE** - Scenes From The Second Storey
15- **ALICE IN CHAINS** - Dirt
16- **VARIOUS** - Singles O.S.T.
17- **WHITE ZOMBIE** - La Sexorcisto: Devil Music Vol I
18- **BLACK CROWES** - The Southern Harmony And Musical Companion
19- **TOOL** - Opiate
20- **NINE INCH NAILS** - Broken

MF
ALBUMS OF THE YEAR

TOP 20 WRITERS ALBUMS OF THE YEAR

1 - **ALICE IN CHAINS** - Dirt (Columbia)
2 - **MINISTRY** - Psalm 69 (Sire)
3 - **BLACK CROWES** - The Southern Harmony And Musical Companion (Def American)
4 - **PEARL JAM** - Ten (Epic)
5 - **TROUBLE** - Manic Frustration (Def American)
6 - **MONSTER MAGNET** - Spine Of God (Glitterhouse)
7 - **NEIL YOUNG** - Harvest Moon (Reprise)
8 - **FAITH NO MORE** - Angel Dust (Slash/London)
9 - **T-RIDE** - T-Ride (Hollywood)
10- **BON JOVI** - Keep The Faith (Jambco)
11- **HELMET** - Meantime (Interscope)
12- **PANTERA** - Vulgar Display Of Power (Atco)
13= **DANZIG** - How The Gods Kill (Def American)
13= **MEGADETH** - Countdown To Extinction (Capitol)
15- **SAIGON KICK** - The Lizard (Atlantic)
16- **REM** - Automatic For The People (Warner Bros)
17- **MOTHER'S FINEST** - Black Radio Won't Play This Record (Scotti Bros)
18- **DREAM THEATRE** - Images & Words (Atco)
19= **NINE INCH NAILS** - Broken (Island)
19= **TESTAMENT** - The Ritual (Atlantic)



Cross my palm with silver, dearie!

The MF team make fools of themselves by predicting what lies ahead. Chelsea for the league? Jim Bowen for Donington? Dio for Priest? You cannot be serious!!!

1993, Eh? Already the last decade of the millenium is looking a tad worn, weary and wary. And those bands whom I thought back on December 31, 1989 would dominate the decade have either split up or disintegrated. Predictions? Bah humbug! But here goes...

Cathedral will emerge with an album that pushes the doom frontiers ever onwards into psychedelia. Savatage will finally have the commercial success they have long since deserved. VoiVod will make an album that will stun the nations. Mötley Crüe will emerge stronger than ever, and everybody will wonder why on earth they ever gave Vince Neil the time of day. David Lee Roth will confound those who have written him off. Warren De Martini will prove he was always the talented Ratt. Fiona will be a megastar (yeah, I've been saying that for seven years, but I will not give up!). Black Sabbath will get back together with Ozzy and everybody thinks it's a new cast for *Last Of The Summer Wine*. Carcass will compose a new theme tune for *El Dorado*. Jim Bowen will host Donington. Everton will probably win the FA Cup (maybe).

Others going up? Solitude Aeturnus, Deicide, Corrosion Of Conformity, Crowforce, Sevenchurch, The Almighty, My Dying Bride, Optimum Wound Profile, Sleep, Earth, Naked Truth, The Frames, Scorn, Izzy Stradlin, White Slug, The Wishplants, The God Machine, Jellyfish, Sykotik Sinfoney and Leyton Orient.

MALCOLM DOME

What does 1993 have in store for us? You may well ask. As the smoke clears on the crystal ball, I can see a box, yes it's all very clear now...

A vote of 'no confidence' will result in another awful general election, and a Labour victory. In the music biz, Glenn Danzig will join The Chippendales, Pantera's vocalist Phil Anselmo will join Right Said Fred, and Wolfsbane will headline *Dinnington*. Yes, and in June I will successfully nail a jelly to the celing!

But seriously, '93 looks set to be a boring year. Despite hardened efforts the EEC will fall apart, the IRA will cause more havoc in London, and a horse with a crap name will win the Grand National. Somewhere a fat bastard will polevault over the side of a luxury yacht (or was that last year?). Sadly, I fear we will lose more legends and loved ones to AIDS.

Musically, Soundgarden will continue to dominate the early part of the year, and Savatage will provide us with another magnificent long player (though how they'll manage without vocalist Jon Oliva is open to question).

The new Winger album, "Blind, Revolution, Mad", will be leaner and meaner, and ex-Journey singer Steve Perry will provide a belter of a platter and - dare I mention it - tour? Guitarist Alex Skolnick will vent his musical frustrations after leaving Testament, and the focus for record companies will return to America's east coast.

On the home front, British rock will continue to lay as dormant as a corpse, apart from a few pockets of inspiration.

Kiss Of The Gypsy will sign a new deal (please!) and start making waves abroad. Wolfsbane will get nasty and appear at Donington (or promotor Maurice Jones will never walk again), and the Tamworth Terrors will go down in history as the best opener ever! 2 Tribes and New England should make steady improvements up to '94, and undoubtedly one band will come from nowhere and surprise us all.

In short, nothing much will change. Same time next year?

CHERYL SMITH

A quick gaze into my all-knowing and all-revealing crystal ball indicates that the following is certain to occur, despite the denials of the guilty parties.

First The Good News: Deep Purple will finally realise the sheer stupidity and utter lunacy of their existence and call it a day, but not before releasing one more album, which will feature Ronnie James Dio on vocals. Dio is, of course, eager for work, as there will be an album and tour by the classic Ozzy/Tony/Geezer/Bill Black Sabbath line-up. Enuff Z'Nuff will break through, despite their weak live shows, because their new album ("Animals With Human Intelligence") is brilliant!

Oklahoma's For Love Not Lisa, who have released an indie/underground EP in the States, will finally relent and sign a major deal, so that fans around the world can get to hear their Iggy Pop/Doors/Ramones/Pink Floyd brand of music. Diamond Head will finally release something. The vintage UFO line-up will record again. Bon Jovi will split up, allowing Jon to continue his musical search for signs of The Boss. Poison will release a brilliant record ("Native Tongue"), and the Coverdale/Page social club (which is supposedly recording an album) will announce that its release has been delayed for another year. Dream Theatre will continue their march to stardom. Queensrÿche will deliver the goods again, as will Dan Reed. And Thank Heaven for the new Aerosmith album, "Get A Grip".

The Bad News: Gene Simmons will re-emerge as a wanna-be record mogul, after realising that Kiss are better off *without* his full attention than *with* it. His contrived all-black rock band Crown Of Thorns, featuring Jean Beauvoir, will make a dreadful record under Gene's guidance. The next record will be from Loz Netto and the next by Jenny Mulduar - whoops, sorry, my mistake. Those last two were his first releases on Simmons Records with RCA! Ronnie Dio will begin work on a solo conceptual album, with the working title "Children Of The Rainbow Dungeon Witches Night". Not to be outdone, Ian Gillan will surface as the new singer on Yngwie Malmsteen's next offering, which will die the quick death it deserves. FM will call it a day, the new Poison album will stiff, leading to a reunion with guitarist CC DeVille, whose own band (Needle Park) will never make a record.

BRIAN BRANDES BRINKERHOFF

Well 1992 was crap, but I must say the signs for 1993 don't look too encouraging. Not as far as music goes. So...

On the football pitch Chelsea will win the league and at least one of the cups, then the Charity Shield and then tear Europe to shreds whilst Crystal Palace and Liverpool will be relegated. England will fail to qualify for the World Cup, but the FA will keep Graham Taylor as England Manager, because they've never had a clue anyway and Chelsea defence supremo Paul Elliott will make a triumphant return after successfully sueing that bastard Saunders and be made PFA Player Of The Year.

British Rock, whilst continuing to be berated by both press and record companies (although Atom Seed, Wolfsbane, The Beyond, Crowforce, New England and Kiss Of The Gypsy will do their best to keep the flag flying), will have major success with Terrorvision, and Little Angels will be major with their third album "Jam", as will The Almighty, whilst Thunder will do their utmost to break America. Successfully? Who knows!

A host of American bands will be dropped, because they only ever sold a few thousand records in the UK and nowhere else. Say goodbye to: King's X, Danger Danger, Manowar, Warrior Soul, Testament, Giant, Metal Church, Fiona, Savatage. A sorry state of affairs really - well in some cases, anyway!

Everyone will finally get totally fed up with the old farts still making a go of it, and Deep Purple, Bad Company and Black Sabbath can hang up their wigs, sit back with their pipes and slippers and stop making fools of themselves. And Status Quo will release a dreadful live album full of half hits and crap medleys. Oh no, they did that this year!

Keep your eyes peeled for Jellyfish, Rage Against The Machine, Flowerhead, The Wishplants, the new Jesus Jones and Pearl Jam albums, and the forthcoming Journey boxed set (which will show all the half-competent idiots in today's AOR bands how it's done). Foreigner will come back with a cracking album, but no-one will care and W.A.S.P. still won't be able to get a record deal in America!

Bon Jovi and Motörhead will split up, the former because the new album's shit and they still can't stand each other, the latter sadly because perhaps their time is now done, and AC/DC really should call it a day after their "Live" extravaganza, but will make another record and go on another tour.

Thrash will become even more redundant as more bands experiment with dance music and extreme rhythms and the coffin lid will finally close on trad metal.

Adieu!

JERRY EWING

COMING SOON! THE REFORMED CLASSIC BLACK SABBATH LINE-UP (L-R): GEEZER BUTLER, OZZY OSBOURNE, TONY IOMMI and BILL WARD - WE THINK!

A nuclear bomb will devastate Seattle. It's later found to be a terrorist attack from the mayors of Minneapolis and San Francisco, both of whom are pissed off at the lack of attention they're getting. Seattle-Aid, formed by Bob Geldof, makes millions to build new houses for the musicians, who all move to Idaho anyway, at the suggestion of Tad mainman Tad Doyle.

Death metal will mutate into a bizarre form of industrial noise, and discos will play Nitzer Ebb right next to Napalm Death. Kylie Minogue will tour with Extreme Noise Terror, billed as 'The Twin Terrors Tour'. The term 'heavy metal' will become obsolete, even more so than in '92. Ozzy will change his mind. Guns n' Roses will change their image several times. Firstly, they will clean up their act and find religion, touring with King's X and lecturing Stryper on the wrongs of their ways. When that doesn't work, they'll adopt flannel shirts and a taste for heroin, eventually headlining Lollapalooza '93.

Judas Priest, Iron Maiden and every other band who's overstayed their welcome, will do a farewell tour together. But nobody will show up.

Body Count and Sugar will tour together on the 'Ice-T & Sugar' jaunt. The Lemonheads will open. Jackyl will sell two copies of their album - if that! Ministry will explode on stage in Detroit at 10pm. At 11pm, the capacity crowd will notice. Helios Creed will get appreciation for his fine solo records, and the ground-breaking with Chrome.

Lemmy will get another wart. I will finally get to Los Angeles, dammit! Last, but not least, Metallica will play 250 shows around the world in 1993, but not one will have an opening act.

BRIAN O'NEILL

The much-touted Black Sabbath reunion turns to farce as John Osbourne (nQ Ozzy) lines up instead for the singerless Judas Priest. Rob Halford, meanwhile, launches Fight, which becomes more of a brawl as he tries to extricate himself from his record deal with Columbia. Axl Rose shaves his head and tears up a picture of the Dali Lama on TV, much to the disgust of millions of Buddhists worldwide. As repentance, GN'R play a gig at Everest base camp. However, the air proves too refined for Rose, who is more used to turning the air blue.

Big Sick Ugly Jim Martin of Faith No More gets, er, well and goes on to open a string of health farms across the States. Tad is one of the first people to check in. Extreme record a Queen tribute called "Everything We Do Was Written By You". L7 record a ballad with Belinda Carlisle. Nirvana tour with a 40-piece orchestra. Deicide become the first rock band to play in Vatican City. Poison release a credible album *(A bit far-fetched that! - Crystal Ball Ed.)*. AC/DC's Angus Young graduates. Freddie Mercury sighted in Sutton Coldfield supermarket. Black Crowes' Chris Robinson eats something. Red Hot Chili Peppers record an album of blues covers. Mottrhead tour the UK to packed halls. Glenn Danzig smiles. Damn Yankees axeman Ted Nugent publishes a book of vegetarian restaurant. On the eve Kiss' "Alive III" album being released, Paul Stanley finally confesses: he's been wearing a chest wig all these years!

An unofficial biography of Metallica blows the lid on drummer Lars Ulrich's NWOBHM fetish - he was once a drum stool for Sledgehammer. Phil Lewis and LA Guns - aw, who gives a toss?!

ANDY MARTIN

Not much happening on the UK front, except Pure, a five-piece from Norwich who cross metal with rave a la now defunct LA band Tomorrow's Child and glam outfit City Kidds, whom have major management (Allan Jones) and are now showcasing in the hope of landing a record deal. Steevie Jaimz and his Jaimz Gang should finally get their act together in '93. Crazy Crazy (featuring ex-Madam X/London/Shame vocalist Wardi) will become a hot property on the UK touring circuit.

Glam should make a welcome return, with the news that Arista Records in the States are looking for the ultimate glam band. There are quite a few contenders out there, including Brooklyn's Penny Lane and Atlanta's Shok L'Amour. Let's not forget LA's Big Bang Babies, Queenie Blast Pop and Alleycat Scratch and Swingin' Thing (now signed to Virgin Publishing).

On the AOR front, watch out for Lance Matthew, whose debut album is due out in January and features the cream of AOR musicians meeting in AOR heaven. Lynn Allen's fourth album is coming in February/March and should finally put them on the map. Glen Burtnick will make a welcome return with a third solo album. Ex-Shooting Star man Gary West will hit the scene with a fine first solo album, and let's not forget LA's No Stranger plus former Harlow man Brad Bailey, who is turning into a bit of an AOR songster, working with Erik Turner (Warrant), Lorraine Lewis (ex-Femme Fatale) and Paul Carrack (Mike & The Mechanics).

Also worth a mention are forthcoming LPs from Joey C. Jones, Pariah (now with Geffen), Blackboard Jungle and Mozart (mega-band a la Queen/Extreme).

The LA club will come bouncing via Fizzy Bangers, Jones Street, VaudVille, Circus and all-gal outfit Bombshell (under the guidance of Poison drummer Rikki Rockett).

And what would '93 be like without a new Poison album? I've heard seven tracks from "Native Tongue" and it sees the band successfully taking a more serious approach a la Bon Jovi. Oh, and good luck to ex-Poison guitarist CC DeVille and his Needle Park project.

KELV HELLRAZER

Former Georgia Satellites man DAN BAIRD is back...As a solo artist. His new album's called "Love Songs For The Hearing Impaired". MALCOLM DOME gets an earful!

Way back in the dark ages, when the Black Crowes were still called Mister Crowe's Garden and blues meant ghettos not hits, the Georgia Satellites were briefly chart paramours. Remember them? Recall the blazing strains of "Keep Your Hands To Yourself", a chart buster several years ago? Maybe not, but back in '86, it seemed that the Satellites were about to take off in every pocket of the planet, bringing briny boogie belligerence to a very wide audience. To me, this was Status Quo with the wink of authenticity.

But, somehow, somewhere, somewhat, the band failed to maintain their momentum. After the initial success of the "Georgia Satellites" album in '86 and the tremendous inroads the band made at the Reading Festival the following year, things seemed to slow up. The "Open All Night" LP (1988) trod water and their final record, "Living In The Land Of Salvation And Sin" (1989), was confused. And with the advent of the Black Crowes, the Satellites eventually crash landed. By November 1990, it was all over...

"In all honesty, by that point my attitude was out of control," admits guitarist/vocalist Dan Baird of that period. "I told the rest of the band that if I were them then I'd fire myself! The whole thing had started to feel like a job to me. I needed to start over."

Thus, the end came swiftly, silently for the Satellites. And Baird himself began to pick up the pieces of his career. Thoroughly dusted down on a mental level, he contacted Def American Records - with a view to gainful employment!

"I saw myself as a kind of talent scout for the label. I wanted to go around and record young bands - but as an anti-producer! You see, I feel that there are too many producers around today who clothe bands in so much studio technology that the bands lose what they have to offer. My idea was to capture what promising young bands are all about. Instead, though, I got a deal!"

The first result of this liaison is the excellent album "Love Songs For The Hearing Impaired", full of upbeat songs, with a bluesy foundation but also a highly efficient, contemporary melodic powder. To my way of thinking, this is the record that the Black Crowes failed to make with their second release. And, it is inevitable that comparisons are made between Baird and the Crowes, although the former Satellite doesn't believe that being signed to the same label as the Robinsons et al with adversely affect him.

"I can't see why being signed to the same company as the Crowes might cause me problems at all. I know some people believe that they took over from the Satellites, but you have to give them credit for a lot more than that. Otherwise, if you maintain that they followed in our footsteps, then you have to accuse us of following on from the Fabulous Thunderbirds."

For Baird, the return to action has seen him link up with something approaching a Georgia Satellites line-up. Drumming on the album is GS man Mauro Magellan. Bassist is Keith Christopher, the original Satellites four-stringer, a former beau of Carlene Carter and the man whom I shall always remember because of an incident on Hallowe'en '86 in Nashville, when a local band he was playing with at the time split up - onstage, in the middle of their set! His replacement in the Satellites was, briefly, Brendan O'Brien, who has since gone on to make a name for himself as a producer with the Black Crowes and Wolfsbane. O'Brien turns up on "Love Songs..." as both producer *and* guitarist. All-in-all, this is quite a formidable and rather perspicatious band - dare one call it the Satellites incarnate? Not according to Baird.

"We are gonna call the band Hique Nooveau, a name I only came up with after the album was recorded, hence the reason it has come out under my own name. This is *not* a Georgia Satellites reunion at all. I wouldn't *dare* go under that name, not without (guitarist) Rick Richards. Otherwise God would strike me down with a fire bolt!

"Sure, I miss the Satellites, at least those nights when we were out there onstage rolling the dice and things really worked. But I just got to the stage when I couldn't do that anymore. But this band will probably do some Satellites numbers on tour (expect the road game to begin in the US during January, to be followed by European and British dates). However, we would only think of doing the more uptempo tunes like "Keep Your Hands To Yourself", because we are equipped to do them."

Live, Hique Nouveau will feature the album's musicians, with O'Brien determined to remain a part of the band for as long as possible.

"Brendan is obviously making good money as a producer and has certain commitments. But he will tour with us as long as he can. And if he has to leave, then we already have someone lined up as a replacement."

For Baird (and, indeed, Magellan) the return to active duty has been too long delayed. The Georgia Satellites made some of the most unpretentious and infectious groove music of the late '80s. And at a time when so many bands emerge with potential, only to have their joyous revelry spoilt by the inanities of egotistical excess, it is a pleasure to welcome back all four of them. Richards is now a member of Izzy Stradlin's Ju Ju Hounds band, making good-time music and "playing again like he's inspired. Rick's got a challenge once more and he's enjoying it!" In the meantime, bassist Rick Price is playing with Replacements mainman Paul Westerberg on the latter's forthcoming solo album.

But for me, there is no doubt where the spiritual home of the Georgia Satellites rests as we prepare to enter 1993 - Hique Nouveau and their "Love Songs For The Hearing Impaired". Proof that there is still nothing to beat music that exudes a simple honesty, humour and honour. Are you listening, Chris and Rich?! ☘

"Love Songs For The Hearing Impaired" is available through Def American/Phonogram. A single, "I Love You Period", is released on January 18.

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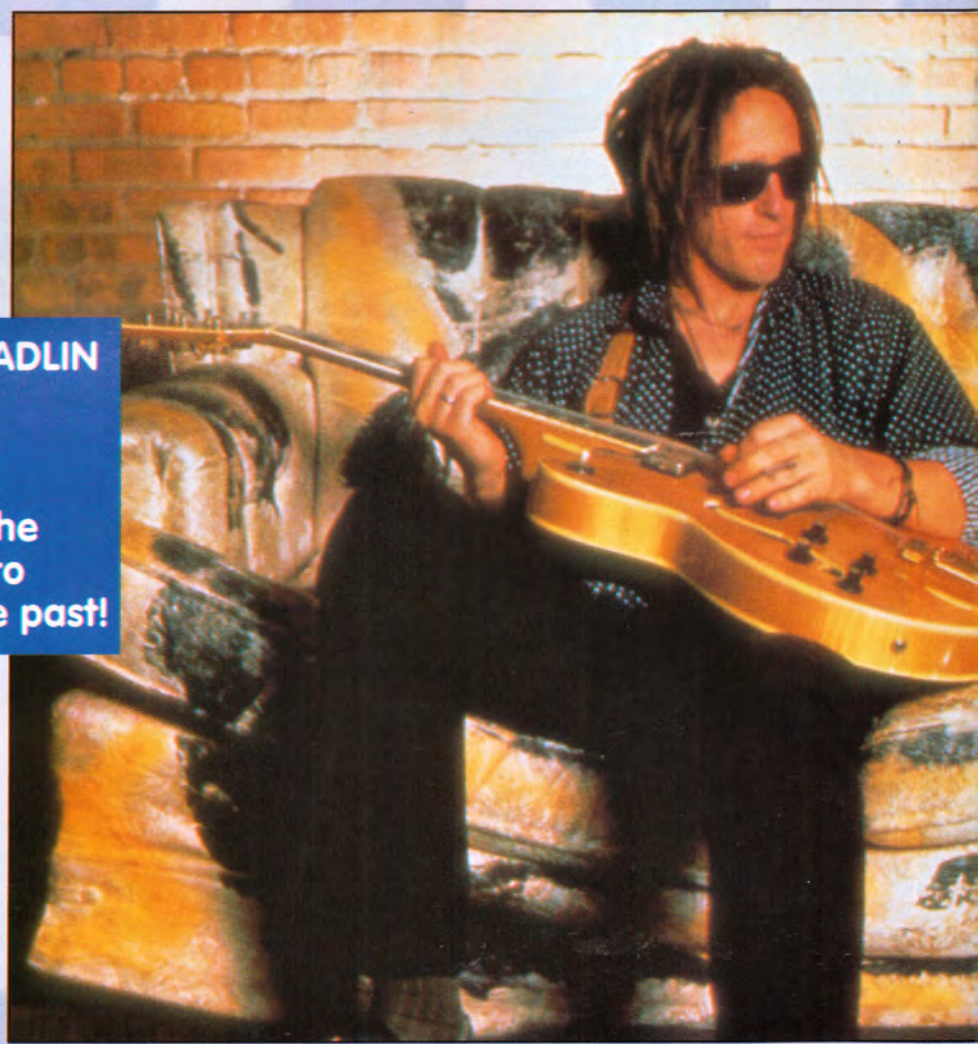
Dog Day Afte

Is there life for IZZY STRADLIN after Guns n' Roses? As he issues an album, "Ju Ju Hounds", MALCOLM DOME finds the guitarist/vocalist ready to face the future...And the past!



Pic George Chin

Izzy Stradlin used to be famous. Or at least that's the way one Copenhagen autograph hunter seemed to see things as he bent over the chicken biryani in a local Indian restaurant to catch the former Guns n' Roses guitarist/vocalist's attention. Strange, but true. And, leaving aside the unwitting impertinence, there is something of rather deeper significance to appreciate in that comment.

Consider. Barely a year ago, Izzy was a key member of the world's most photographed, talked-about, analysed rock'n'roll outfit. Guns n' Roses had ceased being just a successful musical entity and had become the lodestone for a generation. Perhaps no other rock band in a couple of decades had become such a focus for youthful zest/rebellion and society's distrust. If rock music was in danger of becoming a corpulent, toothless sacrifice to consumerism, then Guns n' Roses proved the outlaw spirit could still spit from a guitar and scythe through the blubber.

But the energetic, frenetic reality that fashioned Guns n' Roses has now, it would seem, become its very undoing. In 1992, Guns n' Roses are regarded by many as an ill-tempered beast, out of control and seemingly about to career over the edge of the precipice. Gone are drummer Steven Adler and Izzy Stradlin. To be replaced by a host of faceless shadows. Can anybody even tell me how many people are in Guns n' Roses these days? Shows are cancelled with a public callousness - and if they do take place, the band take to the stage at ludicrous times of the day or night. Guns n' Roses have apparently become victims of their own rebellious nature. For, when you have nothing against which to rebel, maybe you turn in on yourself? For me, Guns n' Roses were once the most dangerous band in the world - and I loved them for it. For me, GN'R '92 bears no resemblance to those I once treasured. Self-confidence has turned into self-destruction.

Izzy Stradlin is no longer involved with the blundering army for which he was once a major tactician. Perhaps one day he will make his peace with the remaining generals. Perhaps not. Maybe the pain will eventually drift away. Maybe not. For the moment, though, he's come to terms with himself, learnt to appreciate life again. Those months during the first leg of the "Use Your Illusion" world tour, when he would travel on his own tour bus, with just his Swedish girlfriend and their dog for company, are in the past. Izzy was estranged from the band long before he left. He was disenchanted with what was happening. He wasn't alone. But whilst others chose to bury their personal disgust, he couldn't. It was too strong. He may not say so, but perhaps he was too much a part of Guns n' Roses to carry on with the facade. Love can kill as much as hate, you know.

So, Izzy's gone solo. He's already put out an EP titled "Pressure Drop". And an album, called "Ju Ju Hounds". Both are on Geffen. Izzy Stradlin is alive and well - even if he's not as famous as he once was!

Sitting quietly in his comfortable Copenhagen hotel room a couple of hours after the Indian restaurant scene, Izzy is reposed. He hasn't drunk or taken drugs for two years. He gulps down sharp wheels of orange juice. The television blares out action from a sporting occasion. The stereo is tuned into a Rolling Stones CD. Izzy is at the time locked into mixing down his now-available album. And whilst this holds the centre of attention, the guitarist/vocalist isn't afraid to tackle the inevitable Guns n' Roses questions, especially on the tricky reason as to why he finally donned a parachute and baled out...

"After the first leg of the tour last year, I wasn't happy with the way things were going in Guns n' Roses. Period. I didn't do the video for "Don't Cry" and went back to the West Cost of America and made the decision to leave. I had spoken at length to Axl the day before, but I just felt that I could no longer carry on with it and had to step out. It was a combination of a lot of stuff, complicated because there was a lot of personal stuff between members of the band as well as business problems. It just didn't feel right to me anymore. We were making tons of money and were the biggest band around, but it just wasn't working. Deep down inside I no longer felt right about it.

"Don't get me wrong, I am really proud of some of the songs we recorded and some of the things we did in those early days when it was just five guys onstage rocking out - I loved that. And there are no harsh vibes from me on the situation. I've heard Axl has to go off once in a while about a lot of things and has raged on me occasionally. But I can handle that to a point, because Axl's..." - Izzy searchs for the right phrase, one that is both diplomatic and dogmatic - "..Er, Axl's just Axl!"

Izzy's restrained, dignified approach contrasts starkly with others who have felt the need to rant and rave publicly about what happened. Perhaps like many others on the outside he just feels that the situation eventually betrayed the band. Let's leave it at that. What matters now to Izzy, and should matter to all of us, is that he's gotten quickly back into the fold making music of his own choice and style.

"Obviously, after leaving Guns I didn't have a financial problem. So I tripped around the US, went to the Grand Canyon, New Orleans, down near the Florida Keys. I drove around in my own van, with all my shit in it. We lived out of the van. In Florida I got involved in surfing. That was a really strange point. I was staying in a Holiday Inn by the ocean and it was such a weird contrast to how big Guns n' Roses are. Stepping into the real world after that was so different - like black and white!

"Anyway, I went down to Florida and went surfing. I did that for a while and then went back to Indiana (Izzy's home state) and started competing in surf trials and got heavily into that for about two months - until winter came!

"At that point I just wasn't interested in music, but once I was back indoors again, with the guitar in the corner, well...I picked it up and started strumming away. The next thing you know I had my eight-track studio set up and an album's worth of tunes written."

From there it was a case of: what next? Well, he called

'noon

up former Broken Homes bassist Jimmy Ashurst, an old friend and, it transpires, someone who has become a crucial ally.

"I called up Jimmy just to say *Hi* and see what's going on, because when you're in a band like Guns n' Roses you can lose contact with a lot of people. I don't know if it's the same for others in big bands, but that was certainly the case for me. Broken Homes had just split up, so I asked him to help me out with my record. He agreed, so I packed up my van and headed back to California, fucked around a bit and put a band together."

During the course of all this activity, Izzy worked with a number of musicians, before settling on the core line-up of himself, Ashurst, drummer Charlie Quinata (once with Bob Dylan) and lead guitarist Rick Richards (previously with the Georgia Satellites).

"At one point (Burning Tree man) Doni Gray was working with me. He was great fun to have around and a good drummer as well. But we wanted a more straightahead man, and so we got in Charlie. As for Rick, well I didn't know at the time that the Satellites had broken up, but we needed to get in a lead guitarist to do the solos. I can do them, but I haven't got the patience to sit down and write them. They never come to me naturally. So we got hold of Rick and it clicked. Actually, I have to be honest and admit that I never set out to form a band. It just happened."

The recent album (co-produced by Izzy and Eddie Ashworth) really does bare the vast spectrum within which Izzy likes to work, taking in reggae, blues, basic rock'n'roll. If you enjoyed his contributions to the "Use Your Illusion" sets ("Dust N' Bones", etc.) then you'll love his new material.

"Basically, I like a lot of different styles of music - reggae, blues, Ramones-style punk, straightahead rock'n'roll...Even in GN'R we did acoustic numbers like "Patience" and "I Used To Love Her But I Had To Kill Her", which also had a country vibe to it. Mind you, we never got around to doing anything with reggae involved! And I've always loved Ramones and Mottrhead - energetic, straightahead stuff. That was always the coolest to me. Everything else just grew from there.

"I can't say that I keep up on the current music scene. In the States Nirvana made a big noise and I love their album "Nevermind". But as for that whole Seattle scene...I read an interview with Nirvana mainman Kurt Cobain recently where he said that he wanted nothing to do with Seattle. That made me laugh, because it was like Guns n' Roses saying *Lafayette, Indiana? Never heard of it!* (Lafayette is where both Izzy and Axl were originally from). I have a buddy who lives in Seattle and loves everything about it - even the rain! But I don't know much about the Seattle music scene myself.

"No, I can't say that I'm much up on what is happening musically. I can't even tell you whether the recession has hit music badly, or how much effect it has had on ordinary American people. I did notice that when I was home in Indiana there seemed to be a lot of robberies in a place which used to have virtually none. I'm not sure if that's related to the recssion, though. But what do I get to see in a city? I go to a studio, record and then go back to the hotel (Izzy recorded his EP and album in several locations). The only news I know comes from the TV. Sure, there's a lot of unemployment around and also frustration, but that's obvious to anyone."

No, unlike some, Izzy Stradlin isn't attempting to be hailed as a lyrical messiah, a musical deity. He just wants to make enjoyable music on his own terms, to entertain others. And he's succeeding. Maybe he's the only musician associated with Guns n' Roses (past and present) who can currently claim to have been true to principles, whatever the temptation.

Izzy has already begun his rehabilitation on the live stage with a short club tour of Europe, as well as heading out recently to Australia and Japan.

"It's nice to get back to the clubs again after playing stadia. It's great to be able to feel the crowd again. I just hope we can sell tickets. If not, it's back to the garage, ha!"

And as both Izzy and Guns straddle the world, their paths will inevitably cross. So, what are the chances of jam sessions between the rhythm guitarist and his former colleagues? Not apparently a priority, or even a passing thought in Izzy's mind as yet.

"I haven't been officially approached to do anything with Guns as yet. And I know what I'm gonna be doing for the next seven or eight months, so it's unlikely that I will have the time to do it. But I'll cross that bridge when I come to it. I think it would be very strange for everyone. Would I get one of the band to jam with me at my shows? I don't know. I'm not sure that Slash, for instance, could play my stuff and I'd have to hide the fucking whiskey - just kidding. Sure, why not? If Slash wants to get up and jam, why not?"

Izzy seems to have rediscovered self-pride and self-respect through his new project, both of which were in danger of being dissipated through Guns n' Roses. And one thing he has studiously avoided with both the EP and album is the introduction of a plethora of major guests. He has the pulling power to have gotten them, but what he was out to create was something a little more intimate and personal. He succeeded. And only one star was brought in - Stones man Ronnie Wood to sing on the song "Take A Look At The Guy". And since it is an old Wood track, his presence is understandable.

"That came about because Jimmy was jamming with keyboardsman Ian McLagan (who was in The Faces with Wood; he also appears on the "Ju Ju Hounds" album) and Woody was in Los Angeles at the same time working on his recent solo album ("Slide On This", available through Continuum). Anyway, Jimmy got hold of Woody's number for me and I called him. Now, I must admit I didn't know what sort of reception I'd get. I had met him a few years ago when Guns did a show in Atlantic City with the Stones (1989) and he seemed really cool. But I wasn't sure if he would remember who I was. But he was great and invited me down to the studio to hear his stuff. We hung out, had dinner, I told him that I was covering "Take A Look At The Guy" and we just sorted it out for him to come down to the studio and sing on it!

"That song and the old Toots & The Maytalls track "Pressure Drop" (once covered by The Clash) are the only covers on the record, but we did cut a few more. We've done the old Chuck Berry number "It Wasn't Me" (also done by George Thorogood) and a song from the Stones album "Metamorphosis" whose title escapes me - it's a two-chord number. We also did a Howlin' Wolf track whilst we were in Chicago - just me, Jimmy and the studio's second engineer on drums. It was really good. But you can't put too many covers on an album, can you?"

And with that quip of wisdom, Izzy heads out towards his waiting bicycle (no limos for this man) and pedals furiously towards the city centre. And also pedals confidently towards a secure future. ☘

The "Pressure Drop" EP and "Ju Ju Hounds" album are both available through Geffen.

JU JU HOUNDS (L-R): IZZY STRADLIN, RICK RICHARDS, JIMMY ASHURST and CHARLIE QUINTANA

Pic George Chin

WIN! W

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We've got Metallica goodies coming out of our ears. Five sets, each consisting of the two new longform videos "A Year And A Half In The Life Of...", the new Metallica biography "Metallica - A Visual Documentary" and a CD version of the "Metallica" album. Plus consolation prizes of five copies of the aforementioned book. Just tell us how many times the band have played at Donington.

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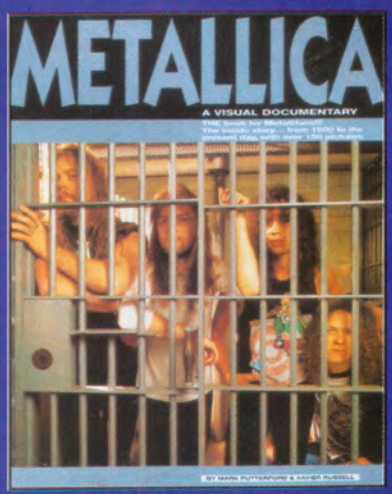

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Want a strictly limited edition of The Stranglers CD boxed set, "The Old Testament"? We've three. One could be yours. Just tell us the title of their first album.

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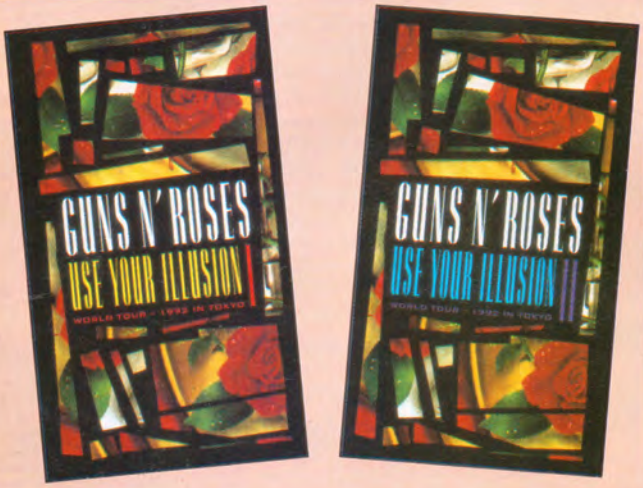

We have five sets of the Guns n' Roses longform videos, "Use Your Illusion World Tour - 1992 In Tokyo Parts One And Two". Want one? Tell us the name of the guitarist who replaced Izzy.

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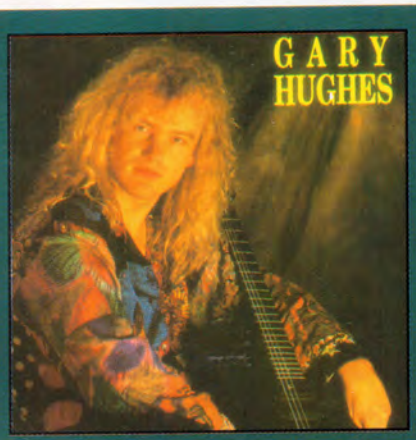
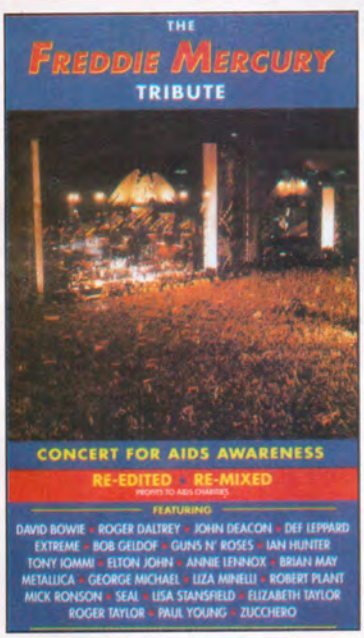


Never heard of Gary Hughes? Well, now's your chance to check out this new AOR hotshot free of charge! We have five copies of his debut album, "Gary Hughes", on offer. Just tell us which AOR band recorded the song "Don't Stop Believin'".

Send you answer on a postcard to: **MF Gary Hughes Competition, 40 Langham Street, London W1N 5RG, England.**

We have ten copies of the longform Megadeth video, "Exposure Of A Dream", on offer. Just tell us the title of the most recent 'Deth album.

Send your answer on a postcard to: **MF Megadeth Competition, 40 Langham Street, London W1N 5RG, England.**



Fancy a copy of the longform video, "The Freddie Mercury Tribute Concert For AIDS Awareness"? We have five on offer. Just name three of the bands who appeared on the bill for the concert at Wembley Stadium.

Send your answer on a postcard to: **MF Tribute Competition, 40 Langham Street, London W1N 5RG, England.**

Thanks are due to the following people for providing the prizes: Jill Reading at PMI, Pandora at Partridge & Storey, Rudy Reed, Chris Charlesworth at Omnibus Books, Sue Brown at Geffen, Jo Pratt at EMI and Mark Ashton at Now & Then Records.

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JERRY EWING catches up with UK rockers THE BEYOND in New York, as they apply the finishing touches to their second album, "Chasm"

"They found this body, or bits of it, in this car near the studio where we're recording. And the other day this guy got run over in the road outside and his leg was just left lying there in the road. Jim (Kersey - bass) went out into the street and saw it. Yeuch!"

It is into this Neil Cooper described hellhole that I am flung in the early hours of the morning.

"Don't worry, you'll be met at JFK," insisted the band's press officer before I'd even taken off the ground in the UK. A few days on the west coast with some other bands, and then I'd fly over to New York to spend the day in the studio with the band and producer Jim Thirlwell (yes, he of Foetus fame) as they record the follow-up to their "Crawl" debut, before returning to the haven of good old Blighty. Simple, right?

NOT! I don't know about you, but I don't trust anyone who looks like a copper. If they're a Spurs supporter it makes the whole thing even more dubious (Lee mate, I told you I'd get you back!). So why on earth did I board that plane at Los Angeles? You tell me!

It's six o'clock in the morning in New York. Bleary eyed I'm standing in the arrivals hall at JFK airport in New York, and...There's no bugger here to meet me! Oh sweet salutations to the morn! And a few not so sweet ones to the band's press officer back home in England!

A few frantic transatlantic phone calls later and I'm in the back of a cab heading for 1st Street, wherein is situated The Beyond's rented flat. Only the cab driver claims he doesn't know where it is! God-damn you man, how many people in New York don't know where 1st Street is?

The ever helpful (sic) cabbie suggests I phone the flat and promptly pulls up in a street that looks like it could have been used in *The Warriors*. Visions of being found chopped up in some New York back-alley flash through my mind before Mr. Cab Driver realises he does know where 1st Street is after all, and within half-an-hour I'm climbing the stairs of the kind of apartment building you used to see Starsky & Hutch crawling around in! It's eight o'clock in the morning.

The Beyond are in bed. Guitarist Andy Gatford arises to let me in, makes me a cup of tea, offers me the sofa bed in the lounge and disapears. With sun blasting its way through the unshaded window it's like a sauna under the duvet. Still, I needed to sweat off a few pounds anyway!

Several hours later, life stirs at Apartment 3A, 129 1st Street. One by one, various members of The Beyond arise, shower and drift into the lounge. Much amusement is to be had at my early morning predicament, and talk drifts through what it was like to be caught in the middle of a riot, and what the local neighborhood's like (see opening quote).

"We've been getting a lot of attention over here with the first album," informs Andy Gatford, reclining in a massive sofa. "It's actually released over here on an independent label (the band are on Harvest in the UK) and we've done some gigs with Mind Funk and got a load of press and stuff on it. As for the new album, well, it's almost done and we're really pleased with the results so far."

"It's pretty hard," adds Kersey. "It'll sound pretty different to the last album."

"It's weird really," states Cooper. "We're pretty proud of making the statement we did with the last album. A lot of people didn't take it the right way..."

"They couldn't handle it," interrupts Gatford.

"Yeah," agrees the drummer, "they couldn't handle it!"

"The sound was so different from a normal rock band," points out vocalist John Whitby. "It was a lot tighter."

"Almost clinical," opines Cooper.

"Yeah," agrees the singer. "Which is what we intended to do, but with this one it's a lot looser and heavier."

Cooper: "It's gonna take your fuckin' head off."

Why decide to record the album in America?

"Because, well it's a strange one really," smiles Cooper. "Jim (Thirlwell) probably won't want us to tell you, but it's because he can't get into the country."

Why?

All four smile, confer quietly, but eventually remain tight lipped.

"Also it's the fact that he uses this studio (BC Studios in Brooklyn), and we came out to see it and it looked cool to us," starts Whitby.

Cooper: "We're not out here to be in a flash studio. It's in a worse area tha anywhere in London..."

Gatford: "This guy Martin Bisi, the engineer, built it from nothing really. It's really good."

Whitby: "It's got a really good atmosphere and being over here allows us to do some first hand promotion too."

The off-the-wall talent of maniac music man Jim Thirlwell has obviously impressed the four Derby lads.

"We came over to meet Jim, and he was the ideal person to do the album," relates Cooper. "We'd have done anything to record with Jim."

Why?

"Well, he was like the obvious choice," continues the drummer. "Mark Dodson wanted to do the album. We could have done the album with a rock producer, but Jim's just so out there, he's not going to mellow us down. He'll let us be ourselves and do anything weird."

"People might expect us to go with someone like Bob Rock," adds John. "That's a kind of major label thing to do. But we heard that Jim wanted to work with us. It was the thing to do and it's turned out really well."

"We've always tried to keep everything music based rather than money based and Jim isn't a money man," reveals Cooper. "He works with bands that he likes."

I have to admit to being somewhat surprised that The Beyond were working in America, especially after their Barry Clempson-produced debut hadn't exactly set the world alight.

"Well, you're seeing the way we live," laughs Neil. "There's no hotels or limos or stuff. It's ham or cheese sandwiches. that's it."

"For dinner and tea," laughs John. "Every day, just ham and cheese sandwiches."

"It's great here," adds a doleful-looking Gatford. "I love it."

Talk drifts away from the culinary delights of Brooklyn to the band's debut album. Personally I'm not a "Crawl" fan, and the band know it. I feel that much of what makes The Beyond such an intruigingly special rock act was lost in a flat production sound.

"I think this album's going to sound more live," states Neil authoratively. "It's been done so quick, we've just banged it down. I think we've gone for a feel thing this time."

"There's bigger sounds," adds Whitby.

"It's going to be a much heavier album," confirms Cooper.

Gatford: "Songwise, the poles have gone further apart. The more extreme stuff has got even more experimental and at the same time, without intending too, some of the songs have got almost commercial."

Cooper: "There's some stuff on the album that's not thrash, but it's so intense. Jim's brought out this really intense side of us, which is great."

How aware were they of people's disappointment with "Crawl" not fulfilling its potential?

"We were aware of how some people reacted, but we still disagree with it," counters Gatford. "It was a statement. That sound is how we were. If we went back and did our first album again it would turn out the same. But we've made that statement and we're moving on from there. We're still pretty proud of that album. We aren't saying now that we can't sound like that first album though, just because some people didn't like it."

"We're just getting into this more powerful-sounding stuff," adds Cooper. "To us, it's almost simpler. Everyone around us is saying it's still The Beyond, but it's just coming out a lot more powerfully."

"Also, with the last album, we'd toured our bollocks off before we went into the studio. This time we're still getting a real buzz off of the songs so we're putting it

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down as we would live. It's got more of that live spark."

The late arising (it's now about one o'clock in the afternoon) has set off a dark rumbling in the stomachs of all, and the interview is postponed for a quick trip to the McDonald's across the road, which would appear to have become the band's dining room of the last few weeks.

Like most things in America, McDonald's food is cheaper and you get more than the British counterpart offers. However, next time you're in Brooklyn and you feel the need to visit the *golden arches*, I'd pass on a quarter pounder with cheese. It's decidedly soggy compared with what's on offer on Oxford Street. That said, the hot fudge sundae (sadly unavailable in the UK) goes down a treat.

Jim Kersey sits looking forlorn as we wolf down our meal. It appears the hapless lad never liked McDonald's in the first place, but in the streets of Brooklyn, it'd be a wise man who ventures off on their own for sustinance.

A cab-ride later and we're outside B.C. Studios and the band are showing me exactly where the leg was found.

"And somewhere around here was that car with the body bits in it," grins Neil.

Right lads, into the studio, eh!

Within the confines of B.C. owner and engineer Martin Bisi scurries around doing engineer type things, and seated on a large leather couch is Mr.Thirlwell. On the walls surrounding him are the sleeves of what I assume are albums recorded here. Most of them belong to Foetus, or whatever name Thirlwell has chosen for whatever particular project.

Seated, the band ask their mentor which tracks are ready to play.

"These haven't been mixed yet," John informs me. "We're still waiting for Jim to add all his little quirky noises and stuff."

"Sentimental Vultures", "Melt", "Onion", "Mother My Love" and "Cypress Era" are amongst tracks chosen for inclusion on "Chasm". Despite having not been mixed, the difference between these and tracks from "Crawl"...Well, it's like comparing Premier League Chelsea and Diadora League Kingstonian.

Where "Crawl" fell flat, these songs leap out at you and immediately grab your attention. The band sound mature beyond their youthful years, and John Whitby's voice is more impressive than it's ever been. With harder-edged rock music moving to the popular front, this is the sort of music that could set The Beyond on the rocky road to stardom with a nice little headstart.

"It's a bit more controlled," smiles Cooper, clearly happy with my reaction. "We aren't trying to jump on any bandwagons or anything. I think we may have calmed down a little bit more."

The band's ability to weave out some King Crimson-like intense jazz-rock work-out remains close to the heart of what The Beyond are about, although there's a strong accessibility to a lot of their new material. All four smile contentedly.

"The rushes you've just heard are just straight recording too," adds Andy. "When the mixing's done it'll be out of this world."

The music is far more melodic than "Crawl", although not necessarily commercial.

"I think that on the first album we were listening to all types of music and not really bothered about what we were playing," states Neil. "I think it's the same with this too."

"Maybe," points out Andy, "on the first album we were still finding our feet with what we were gonna sound like as a band."

"I think," concludes Neil, "that it's just got better all round. The melodic stuff is better and the weirder stuff is even more stupidly weird. More people seem to have commented on the weird stuff."

Weird or not, "Chasm" sounds like being a strong album. Having since heard finished mix of both "Melt" on a sadly unreleased EP, the music has indeed got even better.

However, since the recording of "Chasm", The Beyond's path has been an unsteady one. The aforementioned EP, "Gob", due for release last September never materialised when the band had no live dates to back it up with. Subsequently, a live show at Camden's Underworld saw them a decidedly nervous, apprehensive and extremely out of character four-piece.

"Chasm" will not be released until next February at the earliest, and maybe the long wait in such financially uncertain and unfriendly times has got to the band. Maybe they just had an off night. What I *do* know is that "Chasm" is an album to make people happy. Bristling with the energy that drives the band live, it wipes away stagnant memories of "Crawl".

And with the rise of the likes of Ministry, Soundgarden and others as non-singles bands in the wake of the teenybop stars now failing to get chart placings, one hopes The Beyond's time has at last come. It would be a tragedy to think they could still be lost to record company politics, for in "Chasm" they have an album to do themselves more than proud. ☘

The Beyond are set to release "Chasm" through Harvest Records in February and will be touring in the New Year

All pics John Ricard

KINGDOM

In the first of our retro features JERRY EWING traces the history of AOR supremos TOTO with Steve Lukather, David Paich and Mike Porcaro

STEVE LUKATHER BEFORE ...

AND AFTER

When Toto played to a packed Brixton Academy this September, it was for many the final gig that these giants of a bygone genre would play in the UK. Having been set to renew their relationship with their following, courtesy of "Kingdom Of Desire" (their first proper studio album for five years), and with a world tour in the offing, tragedy struck when drummer Jeff Porcaro died at his home in Los Angeles.

Porcaro was without a doubt one of the world's finest drummers, known both for his drumming with Toto and the multitude of session work that he'd undertaken (one of his last projects had been working on Dire Straits' last album "On Every Street"). Indeed, the members of Toto are well known for their work on other people's records, with Porcaro and guitarist Steve Lukather especially appearing on records from the cream of the rock and pop world.

The irony here, of course, is that whilst they would be working with household names, starting with Bozz Scaggs and moving on to the likes of Michael Jackson, Whitesnake, Bob Seger, Whitney Houston and others, Toto themselves, despite becoming household names with their "IV" album in 1982, never really received the recognition for later albums. The stigma of travelling musos hung too heavy over their heads and put off the less dedicated.

In these days of grunge-fuelled cynicism, the image of the rich LA session musician does not rest well with the dissatisfied youth, and it is to Toto's credit that whilst their latter records weren't exactly chartbusters, they can still command a sell-out crowd at a venue like the Brixton Academy.

TOTO IN 1992: STEVE LUKATHER, DAVID PAICH and MIKE PORCARO

Perhaps one of the most surprising things about Toto is that they formed back in the '70s, as a bunch of school friends determined to play rock'n'roll. A far cry from the image of faceless AOR musos that the press would later hang around their necks.

"We just wanted to get off the streets, because we'd been committing too many crimes," laughs keyboard player David Paich in one of the Kensington Park Hotel's more resplendent suites. "We'd had enough of being arrested, so we decided to form a band.

"No, we'd all been at high school together playing rock'n'roll," he continues, adhering perhaps a little more to the truth behind Toto's formation. "We didn't see ourselves sitting down being violin-type session musicians so we formed a band."

"Liar," giggles the diminutive Porcaro.

But I'd always had the impression that Toto were pretty much known as session players who had formed a band...

"People thought we were session players, but we were a high school rock band," corrects the keyboard player. "We had done some sessions, though. We didn't want to go into the studio green to record our first record. We thought it would be better to get a few years' recording experience under our belts and then record what would be a great debut, instead of having people say *Oh yeah, it's not bad for a first record!*"

That first record reared its head in 1978, and immediately made people sit up and take notice. "Toto" spawned a massive hit in "Hold The Line", an AOR classic that still appears on those horrible *American Rock* style compilations which are always coming out. But, in reality, the album is probably more memorable for the way in which it blended a miasma of contemporary musical styles. Alongside the traditional AOR of "Hold The Line" and "I'll Supply The Love" the band weren't afraid to blend in more soulful and funky influences, as on "Georgy Porgy" (still a live favourite today) or even opt for grandiose pomp on "Child Anthem".

Alongside Jeff Porcaro, Steve Lukather and David Paich, the initial Toto line-up featured David Hungate (bass), Steve Porcaro (keyboards) and in Bobby Kimball an unlikely-looking frontman blessed with a fine voice.

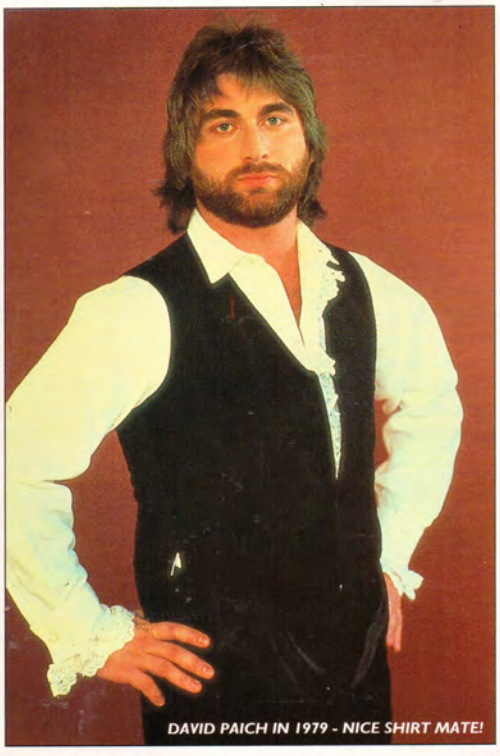
"We weren't very popular with our record company (CBS) when we delivered that album," recalls Paich. "They said there was no continuity on that album. We just wanted to put something on there for everybody because we liked all sorts of music. You know, if I hear one artist, even the greatest, sing ten tracks all in the same style I get bored.

"We wanted to do something new that hadn't been done before. Maybe if we'd played a bunch of hard rock tunes it would have gone down a lot better. But we always thought it would sell."

"It did three million," points out Porcaro.

The core of the Toto line-up has always been Paich, Lukather and the

OF DESIRE



DAVID PAICH IN 1979 - NICE SHIRT MATE!

AND IN 1992 - ONLY THE BEARD REMAINED

Porcaro family. Whilst Mike didn't join the band until "IV", (1982), being too young to really go out on the road, he had been an integral part of the high school band. Not so Messrs. Kimball and Hungate. Where did they come from?

"They're back where they came from," laughs Lukather, a jovial character who has always epitomised the harder side of Toto, and who is carrying a hang-over today from some over-indulgence with Jeff Beck and Dave Gilmour in the hotel bar last night!

Despite Bobby Kimball being Toto's singer, vocal duties have always been shared three ways, Lukather and Paich joining in with whoever had the frontman's role. That is, until Lukather assumed pole position for "Kingdom Of Desire",

"We'd just play a song and anyone who wanted to try it would have a go," reveals Paich. "Whoever sounded best would end up singing it. Usually everyone but me - ha, ha!"

The follow-up to the successful debut album had most people scratching their heads. "Hydra" (1979) was more of a concept affair, indulging in not the most accessible of rock music. Only the pure funk of "99" stood out.

"The "Hydra" thing happened because we had everyone's attention on us and we wanted to do something a little more advanced and eclectic," points out Paich.

"We were all fucked up and didn't know what we were doing," booms Lukather.

"Also, I'd gone through a personal tragedy which explains as lot of the darkness on that album," states Paich. "We just wanted to be a lot more rock'n'roll, a lot more everything. We wanted to wean out the "Georgy Porgy" style."

One point of interest for Toto fans on "Hydra" is that whilst many people believed it was guitarist Steve Lukather posing on the front cover with a huge sword (a direct reference to the song "George And The Dragon"), it was, in fact, keyboard player Steve Porcaro.

Following the less than ecstatically received "Hydra" came "Turn Back" (1980), possibly the least well-known Toto album, and easily their most basic hard rock album. "English Eyes", a rousing AOR belter from the album, was featured in the band's set when they played London's Town & Country Club in 1991, receiving a rousing cheer, but for the most part "Turn Back" remains a little played record.

"We plunged deeper into the abyss of hard rock, eh!" laughs Paich, taking his leave with Porcaro for the airport and leaving Lukather to handle the rest of the band's career.

"Will you call me, so I can check and find out everthing he said?" is Paich's parting shot.

"I'm gonna sell you guys down the river," retorts the guitarist, before declaring "I've always seen this band as a hard rock band. Yeah, I like funk and I like pop, and sometimes I write songs like that, but most of the time it's like *Turn this shit up to 12 and let's go.*"

"Turn Back" didn't boast any hits though, did it?

"That's not just what life's about," Lukather reminds. "In a perfect world it's great yes, you want to have hits and sell millions of records, but we were still trying to find out what it was that we did."

After "Turn Back", Toto had built themselves into an established band. They'd sold around four million albums, had some fairly major hits, and could command sell-out crowds in America (they wouldn't venture over to Europe until 1982). However, not much of this was going to prepare anyone for what woould happen in 1982.

"The record company was pissed off with us, because they felt we were avoiding trying to write songs we could get on the radio," Lukather reveals. "We just wanted to make albums that we wanted to make. Whatever was going to happen would happen. It just happened."

What 'just happened' was "IV", an album that would find itself into a fair proportion of the world's record collections. Three massive hits in "Africa", "I Won't Hold You Back" and "Rosanna" pretty much saw that "IV" would be one of the biggest-selling albums of 1982.

In "Rosanna" Toto unleashed a song that was rumoured to be about actress Rosanna Arquette, who was going out with Steve Porcaro at the time (and would later be associated with Peter Gabriel).

"No, no, no," corrects the guitarist, shaking his head. "She was just trying to cash in. David liked the sound of the name, and he wrote the song.

"I dunno," he grins, "maybe it was about her. Maybe David had some weird sexual fantasy about her!"

TOTO 1991: MIKE PORCARO, DAVID PAICH, JEFF PORCARO and STEVE LUKATHER

A YOUNG LUKATHER LETS RIP

"IV" gave Europeans their first chance to catch Toto live, and they played a one-off at London's Hammersmith Odeon.

"I'm a European kind of guy," declares Lukather. "I'd played The Rainbow with Bozz Scaggs before, but never Hammersmith. It was tough, but great. England is a tough market for us. We've always been slagged by the press, big time. I mean, it reaches humorous levels, really. But they were mean and hateful, too. I cried the first time we really got slagged.

"I mean, the stuff about us just being faceless session men was just bullshit. We were a proper band who just wanted to make records."

What was it like having to deal with the massive sucess of "IV"?

"Well," he begins, "it was nice. At that point the record company were saying *Oh, if you don't get this one together boys we won't be talking to you later.* So we had the last laugh, because they had to re-sign us and pay us loads more money!"

"IV" was the last Toto album to feature both David Hungate and Bobby Kimball.

"David quit before we'd finished "IV"," reveals Lukather. "We did the basic tracks and he quit. He was never a rock'n'roll guy. He used to be a good bass player, but he lives in Nashville and just plays *boom-chukka-boom* and looks about 100 years old! Attitude-wise he could never hang. He was never one of us. I was happy to be in the band, and he was a good musician, so I wasn't gonna say anything. But he quit and Mike was waiting to take over."

And Kimball?

"He got coked out and couldn't sing anymore," is the pointed reply. "He had a great voice when it worked. He'd come out live and not be able to sing. We've always had this thing about singers..."

At least Kimball managed to last four albums, the best stint any singer has managed with the band.

"He just didn't take the gig seriously," claims Lukather. "He wanted to be a rock'n'roll singer, but he never looked the part. I have nothing nice to say about Bobby Kimball."

Much of Lukather's animosity has a lot to do with Kimball trying to take his own version of Toto out on the road, under the banner 'Toto', something that obviously annoyed the remaining members.

"He hangs around with criminals," adds Lukather. "They tried to use our name and bullshit people. The motherfucker stinks and he's got a shitty band."

Most people expected Toto to tour massively to promote "IV" and get straight back in the studio to record a follow-up, but the band opted for a stranger route, recording instead the soundtrack for the science fiction film *Dune*.

"We'd ended up firing Bobby," he declares. "We'd given him one chance to clean his act up, but he'd got fucked up and arrested for selling cocaine. He made us all look bad and it was really embarrassing.

"Anyway, at that point I didn't want to be the singer in the band. We were listening to a bunch of tapes and had a choice of what to do. We wanted to do a real legit soundtrack. We got offered *Footloose*, and turned it down, which is kind of a bad joke, because we'd probably have made a fortune. Instead we ended up doing *Dune* with a full orchestra.

A lot of people feel that was a mistake.

"I don't think it was detrimental, but it didn't do anything to further our career," he sighs. "It really was musical masturbating. It was really David's puppy. Coming from a classical background he wanted to do something like that and we all went along with it. I just look at it as something we did, neither good nor bad."

By the time *Dune* reared its head, a new singer had been chosen in the form of ex-Le Roux singer Fergie Frederiksen, although he wasn't exactly a clear-cut choice.

"Jeff was really impressed with this guy Fergie," states Lukather. "I was into this guy called Eric Martin (now with Mr. Big), but Jeff could be very persuasive."

The first (and ultimately only) Toto album to feature Fergie was 1984's "Isolation". If their first four albums had set Toto up as perhaps the finest exponents of AOR alongside Journey, then "Isolation" was to be one of their greatest totally AOR albums. Loved by fans in this country, it is an album brimming with quality melodic hard rock.

Fergie brought a more suited frontman image for the band, in place of Kimball's slacks, portly stature and very un-rock'n'roll moustache was a slim, youthful-looking blond singer more suited to the catchy strains of "Carmen", "Angel Don't Cry" and "Stranger In Town".

For Toto, however, things weren't actually as rosy as one would have thought.

"That record actually sold about a million units worldwide, but there were no big hits off of it," Lukather declares, expressing surprise at the popularity of "Isolation". "We'd changed singers and the whole thing changed. The whole sound of the band changed. We did some gigs in the States and it was a miserable success. It was like skating on very thin ice."

Lukather's reticence concerning "Isolation" (Toto have rarely played any of the album's songs live) is echoed in the fact that Frederiksen was no sooner in the band than he was out again, but not before he'd been caught on film in Japan, at the Budokan in Tokyo, where he reportedly back-flipped onstage, landing spot on cue for his vocal part to set opener "Carmen"!

"He couldn't sing in the studio," snorts the guitarist. "It was miserable, like pulling teeth. We've just had such a tough time getting people to fit in with what we're about, musically, personality-wise, everything."

Exuent Frederiksen to a career in real estate, and enter Joseph Williams (son of *Star Wars* composer John Williams), for 1986's "Fahrenheit", another of Toto's top quality AOR albums.

"I'd played on his solo album," the guitarist reveals. "I used to be in a band at high school with his brother Mark, who's an excellent drummer and played with people like Billy Squier and stuff."

Williams brought with him another excellent voice and better image (a la Fergie) that suited perfectly the strong AOR direction the band had taken, handling the slightly funky feel of the rock tracks like "Till The End" and "We Can Make It Tonight" with impressive ease, whilst Lukather shined on the ballad "I'll Be Over You".

"You know I really thought he was going to be the one," Lukather sighs. "He got coked up too. I mean, we've all been there at one point or another, but not anymore you know. The "Fahrenheit" tour was great, he was up there nailing them every night. I thought *That's our guy!*

"He was great in the studio, but then he started to lose it. He got fat and...That's evil stuff, man."

TOTO IN 1979: (l-r): DAVID PAICH, JEFF PORCARO, STEVE PORCARO, STEVE LUKATHER, BOBBY KIMBELL AND DAVID HUNGATE

THE LATE JEFF PORCARO

TOTO'S 1992 TOURING LINE-UP

Despite Williams' decline later on, "Fahrenheit" was a success, with "I'll Be Over You" scoring well as a single and the band hit Europe for a massively successful tour.

"We were playing 10,000 seaters and all the seats were filling up," he beams. "The album did half-a-million in America too, which was pretty good."

Not as good as "IV" though?

"Hey, that was, like, five million. You have those records in your career, but not all the time. It was a moment in our career, and that's not what it's about anyway. Yeah, we make a good living, but it's great just being able to play rock music, you know."

"The Seventh One" followed in 1988, again featuring Joseph Williams. Another highly successful album, this one took the band's AOR and moulded it with a funky rock feel that would become immensely popular a few years down the line. But as with many things, Toto never really received recognition for forging a funk-rock sound.

"We've never got any credit for anything," he gripes. "We were doing that sort of thing on our first album!"

Steve Porcaro had left the band prior to "The Seventh One" to pursue a writing career, although he's been involved with Toto since in other roles.

Toto wouldn't become active again until 1990, when they re-appeared with a *Best Of* compilation, "Past To Present", a new singer and another tour. But for two years many thought they wouldn't be a working unit again, especially when Lukather delivered the highly respected and very heavy solo album "Lukather" in 1989.

"I didn't think we'd become a working unit again," Lukather smiles. "It was awful, I just thought we'd never be able to get a singer to stick, you know."

Enter South African Jean Michel Byron, a soulful singer who looked great, but, it would appear, wanted to lead Toto down a soul path, away from the AOR rock of their last couple of albums.

"We made the mistake of listening to the record company and getting this guy Byron in. That was such a mistake," he groans. "That whole time was miserable."

Of four new songs to appear on "Past To Present", three - namely "Can't You Hear What I'm Saying", "Animal" and "Love Has The Power" - all opted for the "99"/"Georgy Porgy" style of Toto, whilst the ballad "Out Of Love" was great, but more George Michael than Toto.

"It was a record company experiment," explains Lukather. "They tried to ruin our career! I don't hold anything against Byron, but how can you hang out with some guy who's never owned a Hendrix or Zeppelin album? He was reading the George Michael story on the bus. I believe he thought he was going to be a big star or something. It was a mistake

"I remember the first gig of the tour, and we didn't know what he was going to be like and there was this big scene afterwards. Like *What the fuck were you doing out there?* It was embarrassing."

Following what Lukather describes as *That horrible mistake with Byron*, it wasn't long before Toto returned to the UK (by this time their standing in America had fallen fairly low, due to record company disinterest in an act who'd been on the same label - Columbia - for 15 years). Only this time it was as a four-piece (Lukather, Paich and the Porcaro brothers), and with a vastly different set from the greatest hits debacle with Byron.

And it was this four-piece who set about recording "Kingdom Of Desire", the heaviest album Toto ever recorded.

"I said *Guy's, we're a rock'n'roll band, remember?* and everybody agreed," he states. "I really loved what we were doing on this album. It shocked people at first, but there are a few things on there for older Toto fans. It has melody, it has balls, it's a live record in a sense."

Sadly Toto's regained sense of vision was halted by the tragic death of Jeff Porcaro. Initial reports suggested a heart attack, induced by a drug he was allergic to in a pesticide he was using whilst gardening. Later reports hinted at drug involvement. Whatever, it was a loss that saddened and shocked the music world.

Toto toured with veteran sessioneer Simon Phillips in the drum seat, but it was a tour dedicated to the memory of the deceased Porcaro. I spoke to Lukather the day after the funeral, and obviously he was in a bad way. At the time, Toto would cease to exist after the memorial tour. Today he's not so certain.

"There's nothing definite either way," he states. "We've had fun out on the road. I dearly miss Jeff, we all do. We finish in Los Angeles at Christmas, and we'll break then. Who knows what the future holds?"

Well, you can expect a second Lukather solo album next year, but as for Toto, we shall have to see. Whatever, they leave in their wake a trail of colourful and varied albums, some being the best examples of AOR available.

Misunderstood and derided perhaps, but a fine band nevertheless. ⁂

THE MF GUIDE TO ESSENTIAL TOTO

ISOLATION

(1984 - CBS)

Many would have probably opted for "IV", due to its multi-platinum status, but it lacks the rockier appeal of the band's first, and only, album with ex-Le Roux singer Fergie Frederiksen.

"Isolation" was the first of a triumvirate of pure AOR albums from Toto that established the band as perhaps the finest exponents of the genre alongside Journey.

You can't argue with the quality of tracks like "Carmen", "Lion", "Stranger In Town", "Angel Don't Cry" or "Holyanna". These tracks rock powerfully and are instilled with an infectious sense of melody. Fergie may have had problems in the studio later on, but he sings like a dream on "Isolation", and if you've ever seen the videos for "Angel Don't Cry" or "Holyanna", he looks pretty good too (even if he didn't actually handle lead vocals on the latter).

Despite being the follow-up to "IV", "Isolation" neither received the expected push from CBS, nor, surprisingly, was it welcomed with open arms by fans. It remains one of the band's least favourite albums, but is one of the most popular with British fans.

Toto went on to the much more popular "Fahrenheit" with Joseph Williams, and Fergie went off to work in real estate. Life, as they say, can be a bitch.

FAHRENHEIT

(1986 - CBS)

After what must have been a shock for the band with "Isolation" stiffing somewhat, "Fahrenheit" once more saw them back in the charts with the ballad "I'll Be Over You".

Not as heavy as its predecessor, it's a worthy album nonetheless. In Jospeh Williams they had another fine singer, and one whom British audiences would actually get to see too.

The opening couplet from this album boasts two of Toto's finest songs ever. "Till The End" and "We Can Make It Tonight" set the tone for the rest of the album, digging straight into a neat, funky hard rock groove, Williams slipping into his new-found role with true skill.

"Without Your Love", "Could This Be Love" and "Lea" join the aforemenioned "I'll Be Over You" as the ballads, all classy examples of skilful writing and musical execution, whilst "Can't Stand It Any Longer" and "Somewhere Tonight" are fine examples of Toto's ability to pen the catchiest of tunes.

Rumour has it that the title track was originally intended for Michael Jackson's "Bad" album, but never used. Listening to its typically Jackson-esque bass line one can only question 'Jacko's sanity in turning it down.

A great album.

THE SEVENTH ONE

(1988 - CBS)

As its title implies, Toto's seventh album, and second to feature the excellent vocals of Joseph Williams (although keyboard player Steve Porcaro had left the band), and third in an excellent trio of brilliant records from the band.

"The Seventh One" eases slowly into its stride, via a couple of slow ballads, "Pamela" and "Anna", and the funked-up "You Got Me" (the kind of track Williams really excelled at). By the time they hit the brilliant "Stop Loving You" things are really cooking.

The David Paich-penned "Mushanga" was a little too close to "Africa" for comfort, but in "Stay Away" they had a rocker to challenge anything by AC/DC. Listening to Lukather let rip on this one is a real treat.

Equally great are the power rock of "Only The Children", the funky groove of "Straight For The Heart", the mellow heaven of "A Thousand Years" and the unbridled pomp of "Home Of The Brave".

Again a splendid dose of AOR that, along with the previous two albums, really did see Toto at their melodic peak. Today, no band comes close to capturing this style of sound, and although AOR means little these days, if you wanted to find out what the fuss was about, you could do a lot worse than checking out any of these three albums.

JERRY EWING

FIRE YOUR GUNS

JERRY EWING talks to vocalist C.J. Snare as US melodic rockers FIREHOUSE prepare for their first UK visit

FIREHOUSE (L-R): PERRY RICHARDSON, BILL LEVERTY, C.J. SNARE

Given the appalling state of melodic rock/AOR at present (have years of bashing at the hands of the press finally taken their toll?), it will undoubtedly come as some surprise to you that Firehouse, who set America alight back in 1990 with their "Firehouse" debut album (spawning at least two Top Ten hits, if I'm not mistaken), are currently on the road working a second album ("Hold Your Fire") that within the space of six months is already nudging platinum and close on the heels of their debut.

A surprise indeed if C.J. Snare (Firehouse vocalist - although he sounds like he should be a drummer to me! The rest of the band is guitarist Bill Leverty, drummer Michael Foster and bassist Perry Richardson) is to be believed. Still, this is what he tells me, and who am I to argue. Still, as we see recent releases from the likes of Slaughter, Damn Yankees, Danger Danger, 21 Guns, Mitch Molloy and Warrant all fail to get off the ground, let alone out of the record racks, thus failing to emulate past successes, it would be easy to surmise that AOR has had its day. Still, as they say, there's an exception to every rule, and it could just be that Firehouse are that exception.

"Firehouse" was as engaging and melodic a debut as you're likely to hear from an American party rock band. Engaging the kind of choruses that made Warrant's "Cherry Pie" so easily enjoyable (and instantly forgettable, if some are to be believed) it was lightweight pop metal for the masses and America's youth chewed up the bubblegum tunes, permed hair and flowery shirts.

England, however, remained aloof, as per. "Firehouse" received a belated domestic release, and the syrupy content of songs like "Rock On The Radio", "Love Of A Lifetime" or "Don't Treat Me Bad" failed to stick with the nation's radio (no change there then!).

June of this year saw the release of the follow-up, "Hold Your Fire", an album that saw them treading a heavier path. Not the *We're real metal bozos, honest* approach Warrant have taken with their latest "Dog Eat Dog" effort, but roughing things up a little more. On top of that, it wasn't as catchy as the debut either. No plus points there, methinks.

"Hold Your Fire" has been out for less than six months, and already it would appear that Firehouse have given up on breaking America, although C.J. assures me they can *Easily play to ten thousand people any night!*

"We're going to take a break for writing in January, till about March," he tells me from his hotel room in Germany. "Then I think we're going to come back to England for some club dates, and then we'll be recording the third album which should be out in September."

Wot, no US tour?

"Well, we've been out on the road with Tesla," he implores.

Doesn't sound like the kind of winning, platinum act package to me. But maybe I'm being unfair. The band's press officer has just called me to confirm that they have shifted onward and upward of some 850,000 copies of the album worldwide. Not bad in these recession hit times. C.J., I stand corrected mate!

Firehouse are currently preparing for their first British visit with some dates in Germany. Their touring partners for this jaunt, or rather headline act, are rock grand-pappies Status Quo.

Status Quo! Jeez, someone's pulling me plonker here.

"Well first we were a bit apprehensive too," he declares, obviously noticing a severe case of stifled giggles. "We thought it might be a mismatch, because they really have an audience that ranges from, like, six to 60, you know. But on the first night and on every night since, for the first song the audience is holding back and checking us out, but by the end of the night, every night we've got *Who, whoa, who-a* (he begins to sing the famed Quo chant down the phone!), and they've got their hand up in the air and clapping and stuff. It's great.

"And the Quo guys have assured us that the British audience is going to be pretty similar, which is great too."

Yeah, but Status Quo? I mean, look what happened to their last support acts like Honeymoon Suite, Gringos Locos and FM. Hardly elevated to multi-platinum status.

"You really think so?" the excitement in his voice clearly drops. "Well, you know, in the States Status Quo are pretty much an unknown quantity and over here we're unknown. Nobody knows us for shit, and if we were to come over here and play the clubs, which was the orginal idea, it wouldn't have worked out. We'd have probably been playing to 20 or 30 people nightly.

"Then again, Status Quo had an opening. We could have tried to headline clubs without any radio airplay and nobody knowing who we are, or we could have opened for Status Quo and a lot more people. If we can pull it off, it might help our credibility too. You never know. They may have a core audience of six to 60, but in the middle there is our audience. They have a few 'bangers that come out."

And now he's had the chance to see his charges in action, what's his opinion?

"I like 'em," he states (but then he probably would, wouldn't he!). "I know they've been around a long time, but they're new to me. Put yourself in my shoes, it's like I've seen them for the first time and their songs are so infectious. I can't get that damn army song ("In The Army Now") out of my head. That and "Whatever You Want", I can see why those songs were hits here. You can tell the band are older, but they're good. They're tight and they do a nice little show."

I inform C.J. of the great Quo slide down the credibility ladder, from hard rock heroes at the beginning of the '80s to mediocre medley morons in the '90s.

"We had to weigh up which was the greater evil," he sighs. "Headlining to nobody, or opening up with Status Quo and playing to lots of people. It was the only choice we had to come over really.

"But I also understand that Europeans don't really want to know about you until you come over and play. You suffer for it, I think. We have a good reputation in the States and we sell a lot of records. But our record's been released here and you've got to get in people's faces, shake hands and let them see your not a faceless piece of American plastic you put on your turntable that you can't identify with."

Bearing that in mind, a one-off club show might do the band a few favours, but as C.J. points out, the schedule is too tight.

"We came directly from Japan from Germany, and then we do the UK and go off to do some South American dates before we take two-and-a-half months off to start writing the new album."

"Hold Your Fire" doesn't seem to have been as successful as the debut.

"Well it hasn't had the time yet," he snorts. "It's almost platinum."

But you really were America's happening band with "Firehouse", were you not?

"Well, I tell you what," he starts. "With this genre of music - melodic hard rock - we're still the happening band of the time. Bands like Warrant are coming out and stiffing, Slaughter's not really happening. Bands like that are just nowhere to be found. And we're still in the midst of this Seattle heyday and recession and things; by the end of the year, though, I expect us to be platinum.

"The "Firehouse" record took six months to go gold in the US (sales of 500,000), and eight or nine months to go platinum (one million) and I think we're going to meet with the same success. We're only in the middle of the second single at the moment."

Why does C.J. think that AOR seems to be on a downer at the moment?

"I don't know," he sighs. "Melodic hard rock has been around a long time, but it comes in waves. You had a time when Def Leppard and Quiet Riot got to the top, and then it went back down again. Then you had Bon Jovi and those type of bands, and then it dipped down again. I think it just comes and goes.

"Right now the Seattle scene seems to be at the forefront of the music scene. But after the 15th Seattle band

MICHAEL FOSTER

comes out it won't be as much of a novelty and take it's rightful place. It'll level off. That's an opinion though, who knows?!"

Maybe it's just not happening anymore for these bands. Maybe the audience has gone completely?

"It's way too early to tell whether you're gonna really crack it," he surmises. "The debut had been going six months before "Don't Treat Me Bad" took off and boom! That was it. That album had a long time to be successful, but with "Hold Your Fire" we're pushing 850,000 and it's only been going six months. "When I Look Into Your Eyes" is doing just as well as "Love Of A Lifetime" did in the States. Actually close, it got to number seven. "Love Of A Lifetime" got to number five."

Then perhaps the outlook is not as bleak for Firehouse as it is for countless others. But there's no denying that the wave seems to be going out to sea!

"It could be, but I just hope that it comes back in," responds C.J. "It seemed to in the past, don't you think?"

I dunno! How well do you think Bon Jovi will do this time around?

"Have you heard the record ("Keep The Faith")?" he enquires.

Yes, and it's crap. Not a patch on any of the other four.

"I agree," he states. "But I think there's a reason for that, Jerry. Look at AC/DC. They have done the same album, basically over and over and over again. Angus Young has said that himself. But people go to see AC/DC because that's what they expect. That's why they're so sucessful.

"I think any band that's successful, they change somewhat within the parameters of the genre of music that they're in, but they don't take a wild left turn into outer space and lose their audience. I think Jon Bon Jovi has gone into some U2 kind of vibe..."

Seems to me he's been jerking off to too many Bruce Springsteen albums!

"Yeah, I guess so," agrees C.J. "It just seems that he's trying to articulate too much through his lyrics. There's a couple of good songs on there, but for the most part there's too many ballads and too low key and he's just losing something, man."

I always thought the main idea of AOR was to party on, dude! It's party music, to have a good time to, if that's your kind of thing.

"Yes, absolutely, and I think this is why Warrant have failed," he claims. ""Cherry Pie", "Heaven" and "I Saw Red" and "Down Boys", this is a good time, fun, party band. All of a sudden they're singing about "April 2031" and "Andy Warhol Was Right" and the lyrics are heavy, and they took a little bit of a direction turn; I talk to a lot of their fans, who are our fans too...

"Look, when you want vanilla ice cream, you go buy vanilla ice cream. When you want Firehouse they're gonna expect some ballads, some melodic stuff and some rock songs too. It's not singing about the political climate wherever in the world. It's singing about having a good time and partying, like you said."

But that sort of attitude also opens up a band like Firehouse to criticism that they're nothing, but a facile musical vehicle.

"But you know what, it's just criticism," he declares. "The higher you lift your head, the more sticks and stones are gonna be thrown at you. It doesn't matter. I can tell you from my own experience that Firehouse does not sit down and contrive our songs. We just like to focus on the positive side of things. When you turn on the news it's always someone getting killed. Music is a form of entertainment and I'd like to think we use it to get away from all that. That's our approach.

"I mean," he continues, "you can call "Love Of A Lifetime" wimpy, but when I sat down to write that it was a heartfelt approach. Remember, I did this for a long time without any fame or money. The people who usually write stuff like that are those who've been in music for a long time, get 20 CDs a day, don't have to buy them. They can listen to all sorts of things and might be a bit jaded, looking for something new. What I use as a barometer for whether I'm doing well is not what the critics say, but if the fans are still coming to the shows and buying the records. If they like that's the real gauge isn't it?"

Whatever you think of Firehouse, you have to admire the forthrightness with which C.J. handles many of the accusations thrown at him, and the belief in his own work.

Indeed, you may, as I do, question the wisdom of playing to a Status Quo crowd who are notorious for only showing an interest in their beloved headlining act, or even whether AOR still holds a valid place into today's musical sphere. But you have to admire C.J.'s resolute belief in Firehouse.

"If ten guys in an office sit and write *This is just faceless party rock and it sucks*, but a million-and-a-half kids buy the records, then I'm going to stick with the majority there," he states.

I don't think you can really argue with that, can you? ☘

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